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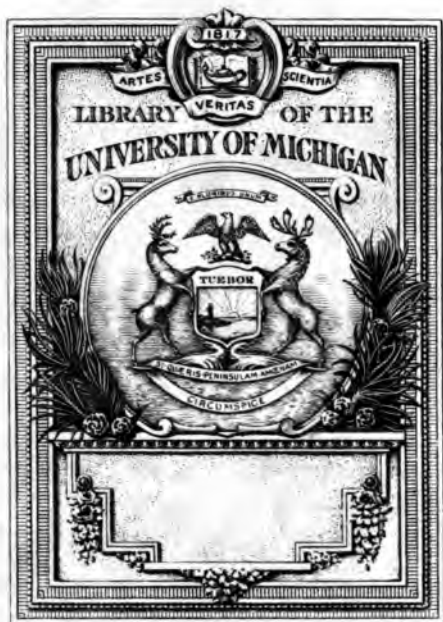
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**THE LITERATURE OF THE
FRENCH RENAISSANCE.**

**London: C. J. CLAY AND SON,
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE,
AVE MARIA LANE.**



**Cambridge: DEIGHTON, BELL, AND CO.
Leipzig: F. A. BROCKHAUS.**

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THE LITERATURE
OF THE
FRENCH RENAISSANCE.

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

BY
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CAMBRIDGE:
UNIVERSITY PRESS
1885

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PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY M.A. AND SON
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PREFACE.

HISTORIES of literature are apt to be confined to biography and criticism. The writers of them concern themselves, not so much with the broad main stream of a nation's literary developement, as with the rivers, sometimes indeed with the tiniest rivulets, which feed it. Thus they produce works, which however interesting and instructive they may be, are hardly entitled to be called histories. For a history, I take it, should have at any rate two features. It should be a continuous story, and it should deal with causes and effects. Into the vexed question of what is the province of History *par excellence*, whether it should confine itself to an account of the organisation of states, or whether it should more fully deserve its preeminence by dealing with the whole life of a nation, I need not happily enter. I will only venture to assert that to every history alike, whether it be a history of politics, or a history of painting, or a history of literature, the

same principle applies. It should present a connected and intelligible story of growth and development.

There are few periods of literature that seem to lend themselves better to historical treatment than that of the French Renaissance. Though it is illustrated by two of the greatest names on the roll of French literature, Rabelais and Montaigne, the general aspect that it presents to us is the record rather of a great national literary movement than of individual men of letters. Moreover this movement was a faithful reflexion of a corresponding change in the whole social and intellectual life of the people. At all times I believe the literature of a nation to be more or less of an index to its moral and intellectual state. It is especially so in times of great stress and fermentation. It was preeminently so in the time of the Renaissance.

Now in order rightly to understand the meaning of any new movement we must first know what was the old state of things which it replaced. To understand the French Revolution we must know something of the *Ancien Régime*. To understand the Renaissance we must know something of the Middle Ages. I have therefore considered that a necessary prelude to a historical account of the literature of the French Renaissance is a sketch of French mediæval literature, and of the education and thought upon which that literature was based. To

give such a sketch is the purport of the present volume. I have tried to be both clear and accurate, but I am well aware that the subject is too wide, and my knowledge of it far too limited, to make perfect accuracy possible, even while keeping, as I have done, to the broadest outline.

The appearance of this introduction by itself perhaps requires explanation. The greater part of it was already written more than two years ago. But since I exchanged the leisure of a briefless barrister for the duties of a college tutor and lecturer I have only been able to work at it by snatches. Though a few chapters of the main portion of my undertaking are written, a considerable time must necessarily elapse before even the first part, which is intended to deal with the reign of Francis I., can be completed. I have therefore preferred to let this introductory volume appear by itself rather than to keep it back for others which may possibly never be ready. I heartily thank the Syndics of the University Press for enabling me to give effect to this desire.

I must also express my best thanks to my friend Mr F. J. H. Jenkinson, Fellow of Trinity College, for going through the whole of the proof-sheets, and correcting various faults of obscurity and bad English ; to my friend, the Rev. H. R. Luard, Registrar of the University, for reading through chapter IV., and making some useful suggestions which I have gladly

adopted; to Mr George Saintsbury for similar good offices with regard to chapter III.; and, above all, to my friend Mr Henry Bradshaw, University Librarian, for much encouragement, and much advice, especially as to chapters IV., VI. and VII., the whole of which he kindly read through in manuscript.

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

May 18, 1885.

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THE CHARACTER OF THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

THE RENAISSANCE IN GENERAL.

It is the privilege, or rather, it is the duty of the historian, to divide the past history of the world into epochs. Such divisions are most helpful, indeed are almost indispensable to the study of history. So we have the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Revolution and so forth. Only let us bear in mind that they are merely relative divisions, that is to say, relative to the point of view at which we stand and from which we contemplate the past, and that possibly an historian in the enlightened future may from his high watch-tower discern no such marked difference between even the nineteenth century and what we call the dark ages as to justify him in excepting it from that category.

So long however as the critical study of history continues, we may rest secure against this ignominy.

The new historical spirit which dates from the beginning of this century has taught historians to distinguish lights and shadows where formerly they saw nothing but uniform dimness, to recognise elevations and depressions in what once seemed a long dreary flat. The tendency therefore of the modern historian is to multiply, rather than to obliterate, epochs, to add to, rather than to decrease, the number of epoch-making events. His difficulty is to determine the limits of these epochs. Occasionally there comes such an event as the French Revolution, which like a swollen mountain-torrent breaks down all barriers, and leaves a distinct landmark between two ages. But as a general rule there is no such crisis in the affairs of men; one age melts gradually and imperceptibly into another.

This is the case with the change from the mediæval to the modern world. It was gradual and imperceptible. The word indeed which is used to denote this change—Renaissance, that is to say, a new birth—bears the impress of an age in which it was regarded as a sudden awakening from a long and profound sleep¹. But we may be sure that the people who lived in those times were unconscious of any such sudden metamorphosis; that they went about their daily business and bought and sold and gossiped without being in the least

¹ Hegel, for instance, speaks of 'the long eventful and terrible night of the Middle Ages.'

aware that 'the glorious Renaissance sun' had turned their night into day. Thus the term Renaissance which etymologically denotes a momentary event, has come to signify an epoch, the epoch during which this gradual change from the mediæval to the modern world was taking place¹.

But can we assign any limits to this epoch? Is it possible for historical purposes to say that the Renaissance began at such and such a date and ended at such and such a date? For the beginning indeed of the Renaissance dates, more or less precise, have been selected by historians, which vary according to the point of view from which the particular writer approaches history. Thus the political historian has chosen the conquest of Granada (1492), the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. (1494), and the Diet of Worms (1495) as the events which for him mark the beginning of a new era. A similar result, though by a different process of thought, is arrived at by the philosophical historian, the historian whose chief aim is to trace the progress of thought and civilisation. Michelet for instance has fixed upon the discovery of America by Columbus (1492) as the decisive epoch-making event. On the other hand those writers who approach the subject from the point of view of literature have chosen a somewhat earlier date. The fact

¹ See the opening sentences of Mr Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy*, the first chapter of which is an admirable exposition of the scope and meaning of the Renaissance.

that the fall of Constantinople with its undeniable, though often exaggerated, influence upon the spread of Greek learning over Western Europe, almost coincides with the invention of printing in Europe (November 15, 1454) seems conclusive for them that this is the true beginning of the Renaissance. There is much to be said in favour of each of these results: there is no obvious reason for preferring one to the other. But does not this very fact forcibly suggest to us the impossibility of fixing a date at all? Moreover we are met by the additional difficulty that the same date will not suit every country. The Renaissance in Italy preceded the Renaissance in France and England and Germany by nearly a hundred years. Must we not then content ourselves with expanding the definition that the Renaissance denotes the transition from the mediæval to the modern world into something like the following:

The Renaissance denotes that transition from the mediæval to the modern world which took place during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but which in different countries began to make itself felt at different dates, and under different aspects, determined by differences either of race or of geographical position or of the existing state of civilisation.

This is not a very precise definition, but greater precision is not, I think, compatible with accuracy. The definition however, such as it is, has only been

arrived at by comparing the conclusions of accredited historians. It will be useful to examine the matter for ourselves and test the result by an inquiry into the causes and nature of the Renaissance.

We are often told that the distinctive feature which differentiates the modern from the mediæval world is the spirit of free inquiry¹. This is no doubt in a general sense true. It is true that the mediæval world was characterised by an exaggerated regard for tradition, as for instance in the sphere of politics by an exaggerated regard for the tradition of the Roman Empire, and in the sphere of religion and art by an exaggerated regard for the tradition of the Roman Church. It is true also that the whole system of mediæval education was based upon an exaggerated regard for tradition, upon the entire absence of the critical spirit. This then being the case, it would seem that in order to determine the superior limit of the Renaissance we must first ascertain when this spirit of free inquiry began to make itself felt.

At first sight our evidence seems to point to a result wholly at variance with any of the dates above mentioned. From the twelfth century onwards we meet with men in whom the spirit of free inquiry reigned supreme. Abélard, Roger Bacon,

¹ "Liberty of thought, the denial of authority, the right of private judgment, call it what you will, is the principle which has been the main agent in the progress of human events during the last three hundred years."—*Quarterly Review*, July, 1882 (on Mr Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy*).

Frederick II., Dante, Petrarch, Wiclif, were all men of singular independence of thought, and with the exception perhaps of Dante and Petrarch were all distinguished by their disregard for tradition and authority. Can we say then that an age which produced such men was characterised by the absence of the spirit of free inquiry? The answer is, that these men stood by themselves; that the very fame which has gathered round their names is partly owing to their isolation, to their conspicuous pre-eminence over their fellows. Moreover, unless we except Abélard, whose teaching was in a large measure carried on by the Schoolmen, none of these men left immediate successors¹. Frederick II. passed like a splendid vision, and the very title, 'the wonder of the world,' (*stupor mundi*) which his admiring contemporaries bestowed upon him expresses their utter inability to comprehend his work or to follow in his footsteps. Roger Bacon had no successor till his great namesake appeared three centuries later. Even Wiclif, for whose work the times were more ripe, had to wait more than a century for Luther to complete what he had begun.

No, just as one swallow does not make a summer, so one man does not make an epoch. He may be a sign of the coming epoch, as the swallow is the sign of the coming summer; but so long as he is alone, or

¹ "Les efforts des héros, des hardis précurseurs, sont restés individuels, isolés, impuissants. Le peuple n'est pas né, qui eût pu les soutenir."—Michelet.

nearly alone, it cannot be said that the new epoch has come.

The philosophical historians would seem on the whole to be right in their conclusions. The spirit of free inquiry can hardly, indeed, be said to have made itself generally felt till at least the latter half of the sixteenth century. Even then, and even in the next century we need not look far for signs that superstition was dying hard. It was in 1634 that Galileo was imprisoned for holding that the earth moved round the sun; it was in 1587 that Bodin, the founder of modern political philosophy and one of the ablest thinkers of his time, published his defence of astrology and witchcraft; it was as late as 1665 that Sir Matthew Hale, one of the most philosophical lawyers that ever sat on the English bench told the jury that 'that there were such creatures as witches he made no doubt at all'.¹ But still in an age in which Columbus overthrew the tradition of mediæval geography by discovering America, in which Copernicus attacked the tradition of mediæval astronomy by discovering the solar system², and Luther shook to its foundations the tradition of the Roman Church by discovering the Bible, it may fairly be said that

¹ Referred to by Coleridge in *Confessions of an inquiring Spirit*, p. 45. The last execution for witchcraft in England is said to have been in 1712.

² Though Copernicus had satisfied himself of the truth of his discovery in 1507, he did not publish it to the world till just before his death in 1543.

the spirit of free inquiry was abroad, that the emancipation of the human reason had begun.

If then we regard the spirit of free inquiry as the chief characteristic of the Renaissance, we shall not be far wrong in taking the close of the fifteenth century for its superior limit. But there is another obvious characteristic of the Renaissance, which in Italy at least was the dominant impulse throughout the whole movement. I mean, the delight in beauty. It is after all but another side of the same impulse as the spirit of free inquiry. For while the latter spirit is an assertion of the freedom of man's intellect, the delight in beauty is an assertion of the freedom of his senses¹. Now the antithesis of this delight in beauty is the ascetic spirit, the spirit which forbids all indulgence, however innocent, of the senses. It is this ascetic spirit, and consequent on it, the toleration and even positive enjoyment of various forms of ugliness, that is one characteristic of mediævalism². The

¹ I need hardly say that I use freedom in its proper sense, and not in the sense of license.

² With his usual profound insight Goethe has made this a leading idea of the *Helena*, that great episode of the second part of *Faust*, which is primarily an allegory of the union of Classic and Romantic Art. It will be remembered that while *Faust*, as Romantic Art, is striving towards the ideal Beauty of Classic Art, typified by *Helena*, *Mephistopheles*, in accordance with his negative character, assumes the mask of one of the *Phorkyds*, that hideous sisterhood of ancient mythology, who, grey-haired from their birth, and with but one eye and one tooth between them, fitly represent the idea of Ugliness. See for the whole idea of the *Helena* Bayard Taylor's excellent translation and notes.

frequent choice of the Last Judgment as a subject for painting, and the copiousness of hideous detail with which it was invariably executed, the almost exclusive representation of the Redeemer in agony rather than in loving majesty¹, the stunted and emaciated forms of Byzantine art, witchcraft, demonology, dances of death, are all signs of the same slavish superstition, of that dark and gloomy feeling, which substitutes the worship of ugliness for the worship of beauty, and a religion of fear for a religion of love.

I am far from wishing to imply that there was no feeling for beauty in the Middle Ages. Our own Cathedrals, and those of the land with whose literature I am now concerned—Durham, Salisbury, Lincoln, Canterbury, Amiens, Chartres, Bourges, Rheims—are living witnesses to the contrary. Italian painters and sculptors, Giotto and Fra Angelico, Ghiberti and Donatello, patient illuminators from their quiet monasteries, Provençal troubadours, German Minnesingers, the countless lyric singers of mediæval France, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, all join their protest. But if we look into the matter more closely, we shall see that, just as it was with the spirit of free inquiry, it is only in a few isolated individuals that the feeling for beauty has altogether free play, that it emancipates itself entirely from the

¹ See Mr Lecky on the tradition of the deformity of Our Lord. *Rationalism in Europe*, i. 257.

bondage of ugliness and asceticism. There is little art in the Middle Ages that is wholly free from the taint. Even in architecture the artist pays habitual tribute to the enemy in the shape of hideous gurgoyles and grinning devils. In no poem do we find such purity of beauty accompanied by so much that is physically repulsive as in the *Divina Commedia*.

Still the manifestations of beauty that we meet with in Italy from the thirteenth century onwards were no mere solitary effulgences like Frederick II. They are part of a continuous current flowing in an ever widening channel to the Renaissance sea. The first intimations of the revival of the feeling for beauty proceeded from Niccola Pisano, the artist of the Pisan pulpit¹. Giotto, born about the time of Pisano's death², carried on with the brush the work which his predecessor had begun with the chisel. During the latter half of the fourteenth century indeed there was little visible progress; but with the fifteenth century dawned a new movement, inaugurated by Masaccio³ and carried on by that famous line of Florentines, which brought painting into closer relationship with human life and made it the free and untrammelled expression of human joys and aspirations.

If then we look at the Renaissance from the

¹ "From him we date the dawn of the æsthetical Renaissance with the same certainty as from Petrarch that of humanism." Symonds, *The Renaissance in Italy*.

² Giotto was born in 1276.

³ Masaccio, born 1402, died 1428.

æsthetic side, we shall be disposed to assign an earlier date for its commencement than the one arrived at by regarding it from the intellectual side. We may with some plausibility make a distinction between the earlier period of Italian art when both painting and sculpture were exclusively religious both in form and spirit, and the days of Donatello and Filippo Lippi and Ghirlandajo when art though still ostensibly confined to religious subjects was thoroughly realistic and secular in feeling, and by the help of this distinction, which after all is by no means a well-marked one, we may say that the Renaissance began early in the fifteenth century. ✓

But the Renaissance has yet a third characteristic, an inquiry into which will perhaps lead us to a different result. This third characteristic is the revival of classical learning, and for our purpose it has a distinct advantage over the two characteristics before mentioned, in that its manifestations are much easier to note. It is impossible to say with any precision when a spirit of free inquiry, or a feeling for beauty first begins to make itself felt in a nation, but a movement like the revival of classical learning can be traced without difficulty and with tolerable certainty from its earliest appearance. ✓

The revival of classical learning began in Italy early in the twelfth century with the revival of the study of Roman Law. When in the year 1143, Rome at the bidding of Arnold of Brescia declared ✓

herself a republic, and elected a senate, it was an unmistakeable sign of the spell which ancient Rome was beginning to exercise over Italy. In the *Divina Commedia*, not only is the great Roman poet chosen by Dante as his guide through the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, but the whole poem is full of allusions to events in Roman history¹. The Italian however who first stimulated his countrymen with a zeal for classical literature—for law-treatises are not properly literature—and who is justly regarded as the father of Italian humanism, is Petrarch. But Petrarch was solely a Latin scholar. Though he fully recognised the importance of Greek to the cause of humanism, he never learnt it himself. In his day Greek was unknown in Italy. Even Boccaccio who may claim to be the first student of Greek in Western Europe, and who succeeded in translating Homer, had, owing to the ignorance of his sole teacher, a very limited knowledge of the language. But though these Latin studies, this Roman Renaissance, as Mr Bryce aptly calls the movement, were but an earlier wave of the current that was setting in towards the whole of classical literature, it must be remembered that the actual Renaissance was born of Greece rather than of Rome. It is true that the

¹ Especially the 6th canto of the *Paradiso* in which the history of the Roman Eagle is traced. In the *De vulgari eloquio* (c. vi.), Dante speaks of his familiarity with the writings of Cicero, Livy, Pliny, Frontinus, and Orosius.

name of Rome continued to exercise too potent a spell over the mind of mediæval Europe and especially over the mind of Italy, not to have a considerable share in determining the course of the Renaissance; it is true that Latin literature, being in a large measure derived from and imitative of her elder sister, went with her hand in hand towards the same result: still the Renaissance on the whole must be regarded as a reaction from the influence of Rome to the influence of Greece.

The contrast between the two influences is well drawn out in a passage in Mommsen's *History of Rome* in which he speaks of *That Hellenic character which sacrificed the whole to its individual elements, the nation to the single state, and the single state to the citizen...which gave free scope to thought in all its grandeur and in all its awefulness;—and that Roman character, which solemnly bound the son to reverence the father, the citizen to reverence the ruler, and all to reverence the gods,...which deemed every one a bad citizen who wished to be different from his fellows*¹. Rome in short sacrificed the individual to the State, Greece the State to the individual; and so far as the Renaissance was the assertion of the freedom of man, of the rights of the individual, it was a reaction from Rome to Greece². ✓

¹ English Translation (1872, 8vo), i. 24.

² For 'Individualism' as a note of the Renaissance see Burckhardt *Die Cultur der R. in Italien* (3rd ed. Leipsic, 1877) i. 159—215.

In the first place, Greece possessed in an extraordinary degree the double spirit which we have seen was characteristic of the Renaissance movement, the spirit of free inquiry, and the delight in beauty. Secondly, all ancient art, and all ancient learning, with the single exception of ancient law, is Greek in origin. In architecture indeed and in some forms of literature the Romans worked out an independent development, but the basis is none the less Greek; while in most branches of learning, in philosophy, in natural science, in medicine, they are content to be mere transcribers. It is much the same with theology. Not only is the Vulgate, so far as regards the New Testament, a translation from the Greek, but the greater and more important part of patristic literature is Greek. In order therefore to become acquainted with the knowledge, thought, and art of the ancients at the fountain-head, it is necessary to go to Greece. It is therefore the revival of Greek learning in Italy that, if we look at the Renaissance from the point of view of humanism, must be regarded as its true starting-point.

The revival of the study of Greek in Italy dates from the appointment of Manuel Chrysoloras to the Chair of Greek at the Florence University in 1396. From this time it was pursued with unremitting ardour, so that the first half of the fifteenth century has been called, after the leader of the movement, the age of Poggio. Cosimo de' Medici, Palla degli

Strozzi, Niccolo de' Niccoli, Pope Nicholas V., and Cardinal Bessarion vied with one another in sending agents to ransack Europe and the East for manuscripts. Learned Greeks following in the wake of Chrysoloras found a ready welcome. The fall of Constantinople (1453) gave fresh impulse to the work of collecting manuscripts and brought a fresh supply of scholars to Italy, but it must be regarded rather as a stimulus to a movement which had long been in existence, than as the primary cause of a movement which had not yet begun¹. Inasmuch however as it gave an undoubted stimulus, and moreover was but the final consummation of that dissolution of the Eastern Empire which had been taking place during the preceding half century, the eloquent phrase of a modern Italian, that *by the fall of Constantinople Italy became sole heir and guardian of the ancient civilisation*², is hardly an exaggerated statement of the importance of the event.

¹ In 1423 Aurispa brought back 238 Greek MSS. to Italy, and not long afterwards Filelfo and Guarino da Verona arrived with a further supply. The library of Niccolo de' Niccoli, who died in 1437, consisted of 800 MSS., many of which were Greek copies imported by him from the East. Bessarion's collection, which became the nucleus of the library of St Mark's at Venice, and a great part of that of Nicholas V. the nucleus of the Vatican library, and of that of Cosimo de' Medici, which with 400 of Niccolo de' Niccoli's MSS. forms the oldest portion of the present Laurentian library, were collected before the fall of Constantinople. After that event the chief importations of the fifteenth century were those made by John Lascaris for Lorenzo de' Medici.

² Carducci, *Angelo Poliziano*, xiv.

Moreover the fall of Constantinople, as I have said, almost coincides with the invention of printing in Europe, without which the store-house of Greek learning would have been opened to Western Europe in vain. Mr Draper in his *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, suggests that the supply of manuscripts in the middle ages was probably equal to the demand, but they were costly and ill-copied, and thus though this method of multiplying books may have sufficed in an age in which the only libraries were those of princes and monasteries, and which was too uncritical to care about accuracy, the revival of learning demanded a cheaper, a more expeditious, a more accurate method. For the purposes of serious study it was necessary that men should have books of their own, and that these books should be faithful transcripts of the original text. Even in the fourteenth century we find Petrarch complaining most bitterly of the inaccuracy with which manuscripts were copied¹. During the first half of the fifteenth century indeed the zeal with which the work of collecting and multiplying manuscripts was carried on in Italy, when the greatest scholars attracted by the munificent payment of their patrons did not disdain to become copyists, satisfied in some measure the requirements of students.

¹ *De remediis utriusque fortunæ*, lib. 1 dial. 43 *De librorum copia*. See Von Reumont, *L. de' Medici* (Leipsic, 1874) B. iv. Abs. i. and iv. and Symonds, ii. pp. 127—131.

Even after the introduction of printing the work of copying still continued. For the wealthy scorned to make use of the new process. It was too cheap, too democratic. *There was not a printed book*, says Vespasiano da Bisticci, himself renowned as a copyist, *in the Duke of Urbino's library: he would have been ashamed of having one*¹.

But though the old method might suffice for the wealthy few, the great mass of students, men who, like Erasmus, bought *books first, and then clothes*, or, like Ramus, began their University career as college servants, could never have collected their stores of learning, had it not been for the new art.

This is the real secret of the importance of printing. It is essentially a popular and anti-oligarchic art. Before printing, learning was confined to the rich and great or to the few ardent scholars, an Edmund Rich, a Grosseteste, a Roger Bacon, whose courage and intellect were high enough to surmount the obstacle of their poverty. But the invention of printing broke down the barriers of patrician exclusiveness. It threw open the right to hold office in the commonwealth of letters to the lowest plebeian.

Moreover not only did it stimulate the spirit of free inquiry by making the means of inquiry more accessible, but by substituting the study of books

¹ *Vite di uomini illustri* (Florence, 1859), p. 99. Vespasiano lived from 1421 to 1498.

✓ for oral teaching it struck at the root of the whole system of mediæval education, the blind adherence to tradition, the slavish dependence of the taught on the teacher. It is hardly too much to say that the whole higher education of the Middle Ages was carried on by means of two time-honoured text-books, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard and the *Summulæ* of Petrus Hispanus. The *Sentences* represented theology, the *Summulæ* Aristotle's logic. The former was a collection of theological propositions compiled from the Fathers; the latter was an abridgement of the *Organon*: but the propositions of the *Sentences* were arranged and analysed in uniformity with the ideas of scholastic philosophy, while the *Summulæ* contained matter of which only hints are to be found in Aristotle. Thus neither was a faithful epitome of what it professed to represent. But such as they were, they formed the principal intellectual food of both professor and student in the Universities of the Middle Ages. The professor dictated commentaries on them, which the students, with more or less fidelity, accumulated in their note-books. Thus when the student in his turn became a professor, he had a goodly store of commentary, to serve as a basis for his own labours. To criticise what he had received, he neither had the means nor the desire. It was no wonder if in the long course of tradition the original text became completely buried beneath the successive strata of

commentary. The same method prevailed in all branches of knowledge. Law fared no better than theology or philosophy. It was a method which stimulated both industry and ingenuity, but to the spirit of free inquiry it was fatal. To the whole method of oral teaching, printing and the necessary consequence of printing, cheap books, dealt the death blow. Henceforth students began to read and to think for themselves. With an enthusiasm for learning which the world has never seen before or since, they flung themselves upon the wealth of literature that poured in upon them. *I shall buy Greek books first, and then clothes*, says Erasmus. *The very women and children have aspired to this glory and celestial manna of good learning*, says Gargantua in his well-known letter to Pantagruel.

In the preceding remarks I am far from wishing to imply that the revival of classical learning was in any sense the cause of the Renaissance¹. Had men's intellects still remained chained by a slavish regard for tradition, had the ascetic spirit still prevented them from indulging their natural craving for beauty, the precious Greek manuscripts would have been left undisturbed in the monasteries. But the new learning, as it was called, was a most valuable stimulus to

¹ Green's remark that "the disclosure of the stores of Greek literature had wrought the revolution of the Renaissance" (*Hist. of the English People*, iii. 11), is, I think, far too strongly put.

the new ideas and aspirations. If it is true that without the new ideas the new learning would have remained untasted, it is equally true that without the new learning the new ideas would have been in danger of perishing for want of food.

The very name which was given to the new learning,—*litteræ humaniores*, humanism—clearly indicates the light in which it was regarded. It indicates that men found in classical literature a powerful advocate of the long-denied claims of humanity, that they welcomed it as a supporter of their protest against mediæval theology, which, carrying to an exaggerated extreme the doctrine of St Augustine, insisted that all human action and human aspiration was sinful; that they listened to it, as a responsive echo to the new feeling that was growing up in their hearts, the awakening to a sense of their birthright, of their right to the free exercise of the faculties with which the Divine Giver of all good things had endowed them, the right to satisfy their intellectual and emotional cravings, the right to think and to love. The oration of Pico della Mirandola *On the dignity of Man* is the eloquent expression of this common feeling¹.

But as all human impulses have in them something of excess, so the Renaissance movement in its

¹ Cf. Mr Lecky's *Rationalism in Europe*, ii. 221. "The sense of human dignity was the chief moral agent of antiquity, and the sense of sin of mediævalism."

revolt from the shackles and swaddling clothes of monastic theology swung too far in the opposite direction. In its eagerness to assert the humanity of man it forgot his divinity; in its reaction from the exclusive worship of the spirit it became material; in its disgust at the corruption of the Christian Church it became pagan. In short, the men of the Renaissance in their passionate yearning after truth and beauty forgot that there was a third aspect of the Divine Perfection—goodness.

This was more especially the case in Italy. The annals of the Italian Renaissance teem with records of lust and crime. For seventy years the Chair of St Peter was filled by a succession of Pontiffs who, with hardly an exception, were notorious for their personal vices¹. To find a fit comparison for the court of Alexander VI. one must go back to the days of ancient Rome, to the court of Caligula, or Nero, or Elagabalus. The temporal princes were, if possible, more cruel and more licentious than the spiritual. *Isolated, crime-haunted, and remorseless, at the same time fierce and timorous, the despot not unfrequently made of vice a fine art for his amusement, and openly defied humanity. Inordinate lust and refined cruelty sated his irritable and jaded appetites. He destroyed pity in his soul, and fed his dogs with living men, or*

¹ From 1464 to 1534. The only exceptions were Pius III. who was Pope for only a few days and Adrian VI. who was Pope for two years.

*spent his brains upon the invention of new torture*¹. The people were not so bad as their rulers, but their open profligacy was a matter of amazement to men of other nations. *I was once in Italy myself*, writes Roger Ascham, *but I thank God my abode there was but nine days; and yet I saw in that little time, in one city, more liberty to sin than ever I heard tell of in our noble city of London in nine years*². And this immorality, this *liberty to sin* is reflected in the whole literature of the Italian Renaissance. No one can read its two most notable productions, *The Prince*, and *Orlando Furioso*, without being oppressed by the cynical indifference to virtue which they display.

As I have said, this excessive *liberty to sin* by which the Renaissance was disfigured was not peculiar to Italy. In all the countries in which the Renaissance movement flourished we find traces of the same spirit of misrule and wantonness. In England it is reflected in the lives of such men as Greene and Marlowe³, and in Marlowe's play *Dr Faustus*. In France the courts of the last kings of the house of Valois vied with those of the Renaissance Popes in

¹ Symonds' *Renaissance in Italy*, i. 114.

² *Renaissance in Italy*, i. 481. The chapter in which this quotation from Ascham occurs is a temperate and impartial account of the state of Italian morality at the time of the Renaissance.

³ For a graphic account of Greene and Marlowe see Green's *Hist. of the English People*, ii. 470—471.

wickedness, and the camp of the Huguenot leader was too often a scene of license and violence. But, for all this, the northern countries were greatly superior to Italy in point of general morality. Granted that Puritanism in this country was a reaction against the undue license of the Renaissance spirit, its very existence shews that the license was not universal. It is from regarding the Renaissance too exclusively as an Italian product and shutting our eyes to the manifestations of it in other countries that we are sometimes led to consider the Reformation as a reaction from the Renaissance. To some extent no doubt the Reformation was a moral regeneration, and men like Calvin embraced and spread its doctrines as a protest against the wickedness of an age in which the foundations of morality had been dangerously loosened. But this was not its dominant characteristic: it was primarily an intellectual rather than a moral reform. In Germany many of the leading reformers, men like Ulrich von Hutten, were of anything but pure morals. In England the Reformation did not prevent Marlowe and his companions from flaunting their debauchery and impiety before the world, nor John Hawkins from inaugurating the slave trade.

A far truer view is to regard the Reformation not as a reaction from, but as a developement of the Renaissance, as the spirit of free inquiry carried into the domain of theology. For it is the spirit of free

inquiry that after all is the real keynote of the Renaissance. If we confine our attention to Italy, we are tempted to look upon the Renaissance as a purely sensuous growth, as the enfranchisement of the senses only, and not also of the intellect. But though we must not leave out of account the æsthetic side, nor forget that, according to the law of human developement, the craving for liberty affected the imaginative nature of man before his intellectual nature, yet our conclusion must be that it was the enfranchisement of the intellect which was the chief work of the Renaissance. And if this be so, it must be to the northern countries, especially to France and to England, that we must look for the Renaissance in its most complete form, for the transition from the mediæval to the modern world in its fullest and freest developement.

We must not however underrate the debt that civilisation owes to Italy. As Mr Symonds says, *it must never be forgotten that as a matter of history the true Renaissance began in Italy.* Yes, it was Italy, alone and single-handed, who began the Renaissance; and that portion of the work which more particularly
| fell to her, the emancipation of the senses, the developement of the imagination, could nowhere else
√ have been done with such brilliancy or with such completeness. The works of her great artists, with which her cities, beautiful by natural position, are made still more beautiful—Giotto's tower, and

Brunelleschi's dome crowning the fair city by the Arno, tender Bellinis and glowing Tintorets rivalling the beauty of Venetian lagoons and skies, Raphael's frescoes adding one more imperishable glory to the eternal city—all these are witnesses to Italy's services in the cause of civilisation that cannot easily be forgotten.

It was Italy too who began the other and higher phase of the Renaissance movement, the enfranchisement of the intellect. But here she only began, she could not complete the work. Her too exclusive devotion to beauty, her indifference to morality, and above all the enslavement of her land, were fatal obstacles to the growth of intellectual freedom. The work was left for other countries to finish. How this was done in one of these countries, France, I shall endeavour to point out in the next chapter.

This inquiry has led us to the following results. We have seen that if we look at the Renaissance solely with reference to its most important characteristic, the spirit of free inquiry, the revolt against tradition, we shall be disposed to put its commencement at the close of the fifteenth century, certainly not earlier than the second half of that century; but we have also seen that there is another characteristic of it, which, though less important, must still not be neglected, and that is the aspiration towards beauty, the revolt against asceticism; and that taking this into account we must correct our former result,

and make the Renaissance begin, in that country at least in which it first appeared, Italy, at the beginning, instead of at the close of the fifteenth century. This result, which, it will be remembered, was arrived at by rather an arbitrary distinction between two phases of Italian art, was in a great measure confirmed by reference to a third characteristic which was the outward sign of the other two, namely the revival of classical learning.

We have thus obtained a roughly calculated date for the beginning of the Renaissance, for the time when the transition from the mediæval to the modern world began to take place. But how long did this period of transition last? When was the process finally completed? It need hardly be said that this question can be answered with as little accuracy as the question when did the Renaissance begin. But for historical purposes it may be taken that by the close of the sixteenth century the process of transition was at an end, and that the modern world had begun. It was then that France after the long disorders of her religious wars settled down under the strong government of Henry IV., and that England passed from the high imaginings and tumultuous passions of the Elizabethan era to the prosaic soberness of James I.¹

¹ "The death of Elizabeth is one of the turning-points of English history. The age of the Renaissance and of the New Monarchy passed away with the Queen." Green, *Hist. of the English People*, iii. p. 5.

For historical purposes therefore we may rest content with the limits assigned to the Renaissance in our definition, namely the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But again I would impress upon the reader that this limitation is made solely for historical convenience, and has no existence in the essence of things. As Maitland has so well pointed out in his *Dark Ages*, with special reference to the ninth and three succeeding centuries, there is no real demarcation between one age and another. The growth of civilisation is as gradual and imperceptible as that of an oak-tree: it does not suddenly pass from night to day, nor even from night to twilight. Even in these latter days of the nineteenth century, separated as we are from what is called the Renaissance not only by three centuries but by the great upheaval of the French Revolution, we are in some things still in mid-Renaissance; can it even be said that we have wholly put off mediævalism¹?

¹ It is not so very long since Matthew Arnold spoke of Oxford as the last stronghold of mediævalism.

CHAPTER II.

THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE.

THE first point of difference to be noted between the Renaissance in France and the Renaissance in Italy is one of time. Roughly speaking it may be said that France was a hundred years behind Italy. It was exactly a hundred years after the arrival of Manuel Chrysoloras in Italy that France received her first competent teacher of Greek in Janus Lascaris (1495). The first half of the sixteenth century in France with its passionate and somewhat disorderly enthusiasm for the study of classical antiquity corresponds to the first half of the fifteenth century in Italy. Ronsard, the first French poet whose work bears a strong impress of the influence of classical studies, was nearly three-quarters of a century later than Poliziano¹. Descartes' *Discours de la Méthode*, which is generally regarded as the first modern French prose work, did not appear till more than a hundred and twenty years after Machiavelli's *Il Principe*².

¹ Ronsard, 1524—1585. Poliziano, 1454—1494.

² The respective dates of the two books are 1513 and 1637.

The *Cid* comes at about the same distance of time after the *Orlando Furioso*¹, and Corneille's hand is stiff, his verses halt, compared with the master-touch, the divine numbers of Ariosto. In short the force of the Renaissance wave had well nigh spent itself in Italy, before more than the first ripple had made itself felt in France. The *Orlando Furioso* is not only the brightest, it is also the latest blossom of the Italian Renaissance literature. It was published but a year after the accession of Francis I., the event which best marks the beginning of the Renaissance in France.

The causes of Italy's precocity need only be rapidly indicated here. In the first place she was in civilisation far in front of her neighbours. At the close of the twelfth century, when her communes, invigorated by their successful struggle with Frederick Barbarossa, had reached the high-water mark of their development, she was politically a hundred years ahead of France, and there can be no doubt but that the freer political life, the deeper sense of individuality on the part of her citizens which she thus gained, was a powerful agent in the production of that harmonious civilisation, that many-sided culture, by which from that time down to the loss of her political freedom she was so eminently distinguished². It is

¹ *Orlando Furioso*, 1516; *Cid*, 1636.

² Readers will remember Macaulay's brilliant sketch of the Italian mediæval world in his essay on Machiavelli. *Works* v. pp. 49—54.

true that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries France could boast of a greater and more varied literature than Italy, but this superiority soon passed away. For France the thirteenth century ends in decline, for Italy it ends in Dante. At the very moment that Dante's master Brunetto Latini was paying his celebrated tribute to the literary headship of France¹, the sceptre was passing from her hands. It was passing to his own country, to the country of his great pupil.

The name of Dante suggests another cause besides her superior civilisation for Italy being so much earlier than France in awaking from mediævalism. Dante gave Italy a language. In place of the numerous dialects in which Italian writers had hitherto been content to express themselves, he forged a national literary language, he set up a common standard of literary excellence. His successors carried on the work. Petrarch added a finished grace, Boccaccio a supple harmony. The one made it popular with scholars and princes, the other carried it into the homes and hearts of the people. Thus, although for nearly a century after Boccaccio's death native literature languished by reason of the too engrossing claims of antiquity, Lorenzo de' Medici

¹ "Et se aucuns demandait por quoi cist livres est ecriz en romans, selonc le langage des Francoys, puisque nos somes Ytaliens, je diroie que ce est per ij raisons; l'une car nos somes en France: et l'autre porce que la parleure est plus delitable et plus commune à toutes gens." *Li livres dou tresor* (Documents Inédits).

and Poliziano, when they essayed once more a native melody, found that the instrument, though long neglected, was of almost perfect mechanism.

It is idle to speculate on what might have happened had a Dante arisen in France, had the *Chanson de Roland* and the romances of King Arthur, which have so much of what may be called epic promise, but yet miss the true epic elevation, been crowned by a great national epic poem, at once the symbol and the result of national unity. The great poet, the great poem, were not forthcoming. It is not too much to say that France did not possess a common literary language till far into the seventeenth century. Till then, every prose writer at least, even Rabelais, even Montaigne, shews decided traces of the *patois* of his own province.

But Italy had other advantages besides her superior civilisation and her common literary language. Her soil was not only more highly cultivated than her neighbour's, it was in a more favourable situation for the reception of the Renaissance seed. It was Italy whose shores lay nearest to Greece, the repository of the ancient civilisation; it was to Italy that the Greek exiles naturally first turned in their flight.

Of more moment than this geographical relationship of Italy to Greece was the great fact that Italy was the lineal descendant of ancient Rome. The memories of Roman institutions, and of the

Roman tongue, though they had grown dim during the six centuries which succeeded the break-up of the Roman Empire in the West, had never been wholly extinguished. They had been kept alive by two agencies, the Church and the Law¹. Italy therefore was quick to assimilate the sap of classical learning and literature because it was already in her system. She hailed the re-discovery of the great writings of antiquity because in part at least they were the writings of her ancestors.

Thuseverything combined to give Italy the start in the race of civilisation, to make her passage through that phase of it which we call the Renaissance, at once earlier and more brilliant than that of France. But if the French Renaissance was a later and less rapid growth, it was infinitely hardier. The Renaissance literature in Italy was succeeded by a long period of darkness, which remained unbroken, save by fitful gleams of light, till the days of Alfieri. The Renaissance literature in France was the prelude to a literature, which, for vigour, variety, and average excellence, has in modern times rarely, if ever, been surpassed.

The reason for this superiority on the part of France, for the fact that the Renaissance produced there more abiding and more far-reaching results, may be ascribed partly to the natural law that precocious and rapid growths are always less hardy

¹ Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire*, p. 31 and p. 172 (7th ed.).

than later and more gradual ones, partly to the character of the French nation, to its being at once more intellectual and less imaginative than the Italian, and therefore more influenced by the spirit of free inquiry than by the worship of beauty; partly to the greater unity and vitality of its political life, but in a large measure to the fact that in France the Renaissance came hand in hand with the Reformation.

By some writers, as I have already noticed, the Renaissance and the Reformation are treated as wholly distinct movements; they speak of the Renaissance as purely an æsthetic revival, which hardly penetrated beyond the Alps, and which had no share in producing the Reformation. But if the view expressed in the former chapter, that the central idea of the Renaissance was the spirit of free inquiry, the spirit of revolt against traditional authority, be the correct one, it follows, as I have said, that we must look upon the Reformation as but a fresh developement of the Renaissance movement, as the result of the spirit of free inquiry carried into theology, as a revolt against the authority of the Roman Church. Now the Renaissance in Italy preceded the Reformation by more than a century. There is no trace in it of any desire to criticise the received theology. The Popes of the Renaissance, though notorious evil livers, were jealous upholders of orthodoxy. The scholars and

the men of letters, though they openly scoffed at a religion upon which the evil practices of its hierophants had brought contempt, had neither sufficient interest nor sufficient courage to question its doctrines. They had flung aside religion, but they could not shake off superstition. They lived sensual and godless lives, but they died in the arms of the Church and in the odour of sanctity¹. The nobler spirits among them, such as Vittorino da Feltre, Guarino da Verona, Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, sought in the writings of the ancients that moral and religious support which their Church refused them. When Cosmo de' Medici lay dying, it was on the authority of Socrates, not of Jesus Christ, that Ficino encouraged him with the prospect of a world beyond the grave.

But until some authority that could commend itself more universally to a modern and a Christian world than the teaching of Socrates or Marcus Aurelius was substituted for the authority of the Church, the Reformation was impossible. That was why Savonarola with all his fiery enthusiasm, and soul-stirring eloquence, with all his passionate love of virtue and hatred of vice failed to make more than a passing impression. He denounced the corruptions of the Romish Church, but he did not attempt to set up anything in her place: he preached repentance

¹ In Benvenuto Cellini's autobiography we have a most characteristic picture of an Italian of the sixteenth century.

but he offered his hearers no guide that would lead them into the right path. It was the translation of the Bible into the vulgar tongue which made the Reformation possible.

In France on the other hand the new learning and the new religion, Greek and heresy, became almost controvertible terms. Lefèvre d'Étaples, the *doyen* of French humanists, translated the New Testament into French in 1524: the Estiennes, the Hebrew scholar François Vatable, Turnèbe, Ramus, the great surgeon Ambroise Paré, the artists Bernard Palissy and Jean Goujon were all avowed protestants; while Clement Marot, Budé, and above all Rabelais, for a time at least, looked on the reformation with more or less favour. In fact so long as the movement appeared to them merely as a revolt against the narrowness and illiberality of monastic theology, as an assertion of the freedom of the human intellect, the men of letters and culture with hardly an exception joined hands with the reformers. It was only when they found that it implied a moral as well as an intellectual regeneration, that it began to wear for some of them a less congenial aspect.

This close connexion between the Reformation and the revival of learning was, on the whole, a great gain to France. It was not as in Germany where the stronger growth of the Reformation completely choked the other. In France they met

on almost equal terms, and the result was that the whole movement was thereby strengthened and elevated both intellectually and morally.

This is especially noticeable in the spirit in which the study of antiquity was pursued. It was the beauty, the exquisite literary form of the ancient masterpieces that captivated the sensuous Italians. It was their wealth of knowledge, their record of experience, their application to the intellectual problems of the day, that attracted the more thoughtful Frenchmen. Ciceronianism, or the clothing of trifles—often filthy trifles—in Latinity which Cicero would have condescended to father, became the loftiest ambition of the Italian scholars. But this phase of scholarship never found favour in France. The French scholars wrote in Latin because Latin was the international language of scholarship, but they wrote to be understood and not to be admired. It was therefore not for the style but for the matter that they read the great writers of antiquity. They read like men thirsting for knowledge. They saw that this mighty ancient civilisation had something more to teach them than how to turn a phrase or polish an epigram. They saw that there was a world of thought to be mastered, a wealth of ideas

¹ In the *Ciceronianus* the claims of five or six French scholars to the proud title of a Ciceronian are considered and rejected. One of the speakers says of Budé: *Qui tribuam quod ille nec ambit, nec agnosceret si tribuero*. Erasmus, Works (Leyden 1703—6) i. 1011 ff.

to be acquired; from Hippocrates and Galen new ideas on medicine, from the Pandects new ideas on law, from the patristic writings new ideas on theology. For the Vulgate was to be substituted the sacred text itself; for the jurisprudence of the glossators, the jurisprudence of Rome; for the Aristotle of the Schoolmen, Aristotle as he really was.

It is true that, like their neighbours, their enthusiasm led them into a few absurdities, such as latinising their names, but on the whole it must be admitted that they brought to the study of antiquity a sober and intelligent spirit, with the result that their classical knowledge, instead of being frittered away in vain efforts to rival Virgil or Cicero, not only became the foundation of serious and fruitful study in many departments of learning, but penetrated and moulded the whole literature and thought of the country.

Morally too the French scholars were far superior to their Italian predecessors. Among the Italian scholars virtue was rare, even decency was exceptional. But French humanism can boast of a long roll of names honourable not only for their high attainments, but also for their integrity and purity of life. Robert Estienne, Turnèbe, Ramus, Cujas, the Chancellor de l'Hôpital, Estienne Pasquier, Thou, are men whom any country would be proud to claim for her sons.

And as with the humanists, so it was with the

Renaissance generally in France. On the whole it was a manly and intelligent movement. There was much evil no doubt, much 'liberty to sin,' especially in high places. France no more than other countries escaped the excesses which the spirit of revolt engendered. The memoirs of the time present us with a terrible picture of licentiousness and blood-thirstiness both in court and camp. But much of this was due partly to the pernicious influence of the combined houses of Valois and Medici, partly to the social and moral disorganisation which a civil war inevitably engenders. In spite of these excesses the well of national life remained uncontaminated. There was plenty of vigour, and freedom and good sense; there was confidence in the present, and hope for the future. This is faithfully reflected in the literature of the period. The literature of the French Renaissance, though in point of form it is far below that of the Italian Renaissance, in manliness and vigour and hopefulness is far superior to it. It is in short a literature, not of maturity, but of promise. One has only to compare its greatest name, Rabelais, with the greatest name of the Italian Renaissance, Ariosto, to see the difference. How formless! how crude! how gross! how full of cumbersome details and wearisome repetitions is Rabelais! How limpid! how harmonious is Ariosto! what perfection of style, what delicacy of touch! He never wearies us, he never

offends our taste. And yet one rises from the reading of Rabelais with a feeling of buoyant cheerfulness, while Ariosto in spite of his wit and gaiety is inexpressibly depressing. The reason is that the one bids us hope, the other bids us despair; the one believes in truth and goodness and in the future of the human race, the other believes in nothing but the pleasures of the senses, which come and go like many-coloured bubbles and leave behind them a boundless *ennui*. Rabelais and Ariosto are true types of the Renaissance as it appeared in their respective countries.

Of course no more of France than of any other country can it be said that the Renaissance began or ended there at any particular date. But here as elsewhere it is possible for historical purposes to select certain limits which adequately embrace the chief activity of the movement. The accession of Francis I. (1515) seems to mark the beginning of a new era, an era of unrest and brilliancy which sufficiently contrasts with the repose and commonplace of the reign of Louis XII. Moreover the name of Francis is closely connected in popular thought with the Renaissance. Nor is this undeserved. In spite of his many vices, and the pitiful flashiness of his character, he was—whether from vanity or from genuine sympathy is no matter—a munificent patron of art and letters, and especially of the two movements—the study of Greek and printing—upon

which, as I have said, the Renaissance, as a literary regeneration, in so large a manner rests.

The accession of Francis I. will therefore be the best date to take for the beginning of the Renaissance in France. The other limit is a more difficult matter to determine.

Strictly speaking what is called modern French literature does not begin till at least the fourth decade of the seventeenth century. The earlier part of the century is from a literary point of view still a period of transition. The close of the sixteenth century however is generally taken by French writers to represent the close of the Renaissance, and there is no doubt that it fairly well represents it. The reign of Henry IV. is another period of repose in politics and of commonplace in literature following a period of political disturbance and more or less of literary brilliance. It practically begins in 1594 with his entry into Paris, and this date I shall take as the inferior limit of the Renaissance in France. It will be found to have a certain amount of literary propriety, for it just includes both Montaigne, the greatest French name of the second half of the sixteenth century, who died in 1592, and the famous *Satire Ménippée* which did so much to secure the triumph of Henry IV. and which was published in 1593. It does not indeed include Brantôme, who lived till 1614 and did not begin to write his *Mémoires* till about 1594; nor does it

include Regnier who lived till 1613. But both Brantôme and Regnier are in spirit so thoroughly of the Renaissance, so utterly opposed to the correct and pedantic spirit which pervaded French literature during the reign of Malherbe, that I shall not feel myself precluded from treating of them by the limit I have somewhat arbitrarily chosen.

The Renaissance then in these pages will begin with the year 1515 and end with the year 1594. But this period of seventy-nine years naturally falls into two well-defined divisions, the one more or less coinciding with the reign of Francis I. (1515—1547), the other with those of the remaining princes of the house of Valois. The first period is the age of Rabelais and Marot, the second of the Pléiade and Montaigne. The first period is one of feverish activity, of bold speculation and patient learning, but it is not a period of great literary production. Besides Rabelais, Marot and perhaps Calvin, who had considerable influence upon the style of French prose, there is not a single name of permanent literary importance. Marguérite of Navarre and Bonaventure des Périers are highly interesting figures, but their real literary value is not very great. Then there are Louise Labé, a graceful poetess, and Mellin de St Gelais, who is credited with having introduced the sonnet into France, and that is almost literally all. The real importance of the period, besides the great central figure of Rabelais, and the poetical

improvements of Marot, consists in the labours of the scholars and the printers, in the collection of manuscripts, in the formation of libraries, in the translation of the Bible and the masterpieces of classical antiquity, and in the dissemination by the printing-press of literature, both classical and national, throughout the length and breadth of the land. The period therefore, regarded from the point of view of literary production, is truly described by many French writers as 'the preparation for the Renaissance' rather than as the Renaissance itself¹.

The second period, from 1547 to 1594, lands us in the full flood of Renaissance literature. There is no longer any stint of literary production. Ronsard and the whole company of the Pléiade, Amyot the first of French translators, who almost turned Plutarch into a Frenchman, Bodin the founder of modern political science, a host of memoir-writers from Montluc to Brantôme, d'Aubigné, Regnier, the writers of the *Satire Ménippée* and above all Montaigne, make this period one of the most important in French literature.

These then are the two parts into which I propose to divide my subject, the first part dealing with the reign of Francis I., the second with the

¹ M. d'Héricault (Crépet, *Les poètes français* i. 498) puts this view rather too strongly:—"Car il ne faut pas s'y tromper, quoi qu'en aient pu dire jusqu'ici les historiens, le règne de François I. n'est pas la Renaissance, il n'en est que la préface."

period from his death to the entry of Henry IV. into Paris in 1594.

Before however entering upon the main course of my narrative, I must, by way of further introduction, give some account of mediæval literature and learning. It is impossible clearly to understand the nature of the change which the Renaissance brought about in French literature without some knowledge of the state of things previously existing. I therefore propose first of all to attempt a brief sketch of French mediæval literature, and then to give some account of mediæval learning, describing the two chief agencies by which that learning was fostered and in which the new movement found the strongest resistance, the Paris University and the Religious Orders. Finally I shall conclude this volume of introduction with an account of the various intimations by which, before 1515, the coming Renaissance was foreshadowed.

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER III.

MEDIÆVAL LITERATURE¹.

IT is the proud and just boast of French literature that it can look back upon a long and uninterrupted descent of eight centuries. Like other literatures it has had its ebbing and its flowing tides, but from the *Chanson de Roland* to the latest rhapsody of Victor Hugo the great stream has never run dry. It is only however within comparatively recent years that France has found and recognised her literary ancestors. Boileau made French poetry begin with Villon, but even Villon was nothing to him but a name. A century later nearly the whole of French literature before Malherbe was practically unknown, save to a few learned antiquarians. It was the Romantic move-

¹ For this sketch of French mediæval literature I have consulted the following guides: the *Histoire Littéraire*; Aubertin, *Histoire de la langue et de la littérature françaises au moyen âge*, 2 tt. 8vo. (1878); Crépet, *Les poètes français*, (1861), t. 1; Saintsbury, *A short history of French literature* (1882), pp. 1—154.

ment of the early part of this century which turned the attention of Frenchmen to the earlier literature and revealed to them a store of unsuspected riches. Since then they have applied themselves to the task of recovering their lost ancestors with unceasing and loving diligence ; and if their present veneration seem somewhat excessive, it may surely be pardoned, as in men who have found a long-missing heirloom.

French mediæval literature divides itself with sufficient distinctness into two periods, a period of brilliancy, of creation, of originality, and a period of commonplace, of criticism, of imitation. Roughly speaking, what may be called the creative period, extends from the close of the eleventh century, the probable date of the *Chanson de Roland*, to the beginning of the reign of Philip the Fair (1285). It almost exactly corresponds with the epoch of the Crusades (1096—1291). This period again may be subdivided into two halves, which it is convenient to denote by the names of the two centuries to which they roughly correspond. To the twelfth century belong the three earliest forms of French poetical romance—or, as it is sometimes called, French epic—the *Chansons de Gestes*, or romances which treat of French history, the Breton or Arthurian romances, and the classical romances¹; the rhymed

¹ Ne sont que trois matières à nul homme entendant :

De France, de Bretagne et de Rome la Grant.

Jean Bodel (13th century)

chronicles of Gaymar and Wace; a few anonymous songs, of which the best known is *Bele Erembors* with its refrain of *E Raynaut amis!*; the *Bestiaire* (a species of didactic poem on natural history) of Philippe de Thaun, and the mystery of *Adam*.

The period called the thirteenth century, which begins with the reign of Philip Augustus (1180), is one of the most noteworthy epochs in the whole history of French literature. It is true that it produced nothing of quite so high a quality of inspiration as the *Chansons de Gestes*, but in general productiveness and variety it greatly surpassed the twelfth century; and although during the last thirty years traces of decay are plainly visible, a high standard of excellence was maintained to the close¹. There are few branches of literature which have not their representative in this remarkable period. Narrative poetry is represented by the *Romans d'Aventures*, a new and inferior developement of the poetical romances, closely resembling in form those of the Arthurian cycle, and by the *Lais* of Marie de France; lyric poetry by a crowd of singers with Audefroy le Bastard, Thibaut de Champagne, and Quesnes or Coësnes de Béthune² at their head; and the drama, though in a far ruder stage, by miracle-plays and mysteries and by the earliest

¹ See M. Moland's eloquent panegyric on the 13th century. *Crépet*, i. 75—77.

² He was an ancestor of Sully.

form of French comedy, the *Jeu*. Even the comic opera, in which the French genius has proved itself so great an adept, has its representative in Adam de la Halle's pastoral drama of *Robin et Marion*¹. Then we have the peculiarly French growth of the *fabliaux* with the satires of Rutebœuf to represent satirical poetry, while another form of poem, which like the *fabliau* found its most consummate artist in La Fontaine—the beast-poem—is represented by the *Ysopet* of the aforesaid Marie de France. Finally there is the great *Roman de Renart*, both beast-poem and *fabliau* in one, and the first part of the equally famous *Roman de la Rose*.

The prose too of the thirteenth century, though inferior to the poetry, is far from unimportant. For history we have Ville-hardouin's *Conquête de Constantinoble* and Joinville's *Histoire de St Louis*², while various original tales, of which the best known is the charming story of *Aucassin et Nicolette*, mark the beginnings of the modern novel.

Nor was this activity confined to literature. The thirteenth century in France was the age

¹ Adam de la Halle was also the author of the earliest comedy *li Jus Adam* or *de la Feuillie*, written about 1262.

² Ville-hardouin, though his book was written between 1207 and 1213, is sometimes reckoned as belonging to the 12th century. Joinville, whose history was not completed till 1309, both by his life (he was born in 1224) and by the character of his work belongs to the 13th century.

of speculative thought, of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, who, though not Frenchmen by birth, made Paris the scene of their teaching and the Paris University the first in Christendom; it was the age of pulpit eloquence, which did not again reach so high a pitch till the days of Bossuet; and it was the golden age of Gothic architecture, the age of Notre-Dame and of Rheims and Chartres and Amiens¹.

There are two features of this thirteenth century literature to which, before passing on to the period of decline, I would briefly call attention.

In the first place it is notable for the first appearance of that peculiarly French characteristic known as the *esprit gaulois*. The literature of the preceding century, the *Chansons de Gestes* and the Arthurian romances, was a courtly literature: it was the product of men who lived in a courtly atmosphere and who were well satisfied with the world which they portrayed, with chivalry and crusading and church discipline. But in the thirteenth century there begins to be heard a murmur of voices from a rival camp, from the camp of those who are more prone to see evil than good in the world, who criticise rather than admire, who doubt rather than believe. To these persons, living as they did for the most part in anything but a courtly atmosphere,

¹ Notre-Dame was completed about 1214, Rheims 1241, Chartres 1260, Amiens 1272.

mediæval society seemed by no means a perfect arrangement. It might seem so to gay knights, fat abbots, and sleek *trouvères*, but for the villein it wore a different aspect. It is his voice which now for the first time begins to be heard in French literature and to infuse into it this *esprit gaulois*. It appears then that the *esprit gaulois* is a species of that general spirit of mutiny which is more inclined to dwell upon the dark than upon the light side of human nature. But it is neither the serious moral indignation of a Savonarola, nor the savage satire of a Juvenal, nor the sympathetic laughter of a Cervantes. M. Lenient has defined it as *malice enveloppée de bonhomie*¹, a definition upon which it would be difficult to improve. It should however be added that it is distinguished by a lively freedom of utterance, which too often degenerates into irreverence or coarseness.

The *race gauloise* then, as French writers love to call it, which numbers among its members so many distinguished names in French literature, above all Rabelais and La Fontaine, may be said to have made its first appearance in the thirteenth century; and the forefathers of the race are the writers of the *fabliau* or tale in verse, that one species of early French literature, which, as Mr Saintsbury points out, is of purely native origin². For while in the

¹ *La Satire en France au moyen âge* (nouv. éd. 1877), p. 5.

² *Hist. of French Literature*, 47. For the *fabliaux* and the *esprit gaulois* see Crépet, *Intr.* p. xx. xxi. (by Sainte-Beuve); Lenient, c. v; *Hist. Litt.* xxiii. 69—88 (by Leclerc).

Chansons de Gestes a Teutonic influence is apparent, and the Arthurian romances and the *lais* are Breton, the *fabliau* is the special product of Picardy and the *Ile de France*. From the *fabliau* the *esprit gaulois* spread to the kindred forms of literature. The *Roman de Renart*, with its mocking cynicism, is the counterpart to the *Romans d'Aventures*, the representation of the reverse side of feudal society. The courtly songs of Thibaut and Béthune are supplemented by the rude satires of Rutebœuf.

The name of Rutebœuf brings me to the second feature of the thirteenth century literature to which I would call attention. It is that now for the first time literature ceases to be anonymous. The few songs that we possess of the twelfth century are all anonymous; so for the most part are the *Chansons de Gestes* and the Arthurian Romances. But in the thirteenth century we have not only a great literature but well-known names—Adam or Adenès le Roi¹, Thibaut de Champagne, Adam de la Halle, Marie de France, Guillaume Lorris, Ville-hardouin, Joinville, Rutebœuf. But of all these Rutebœuf perhaps has the most distinct personality². Few facts indeed of

¹ Author of the *Roman d'Aventures of Cléomadès*, and of three refashioned *Chansons de Gestes*, of which the best known is *Berte aux grans piés*. He was doubtless called 'le Roi' because he was king of the minstrels at the court of the Duke of Brabant.

² For Rutebœuf see *Hist. Litt.* xx. 719—731 (by P. Paris); Crépet, i. 249—257 (by L. Moland), and the preface to the edition of his works by A. Jubinal (2 vols. 1839).

his life are known—none but what he tells us himself—but his writing is distinctly personal; he tells us about himself with the egoism—only that it is more naïve—of a modern poet¹. It is sometimes said that modern French poetry begins with Villon because he is the first poet who has this note of personality; but according to this theory it should begin not with Villon, but with Rutebœuf.

Rutebœuf, in fact, the poor nameless outcast², is the most conspicuous figure of the latter half of this thirteenth-century literature. It is a sure sign that the decay had begun. Other signs indeed are not wanting, such as the recasting in prose of the old poetical romances or the allegorising and scholastic spirit of the first part of the *Roman de la Rose*, but it is Rutebœuf's satires and *fabliaux* which speak more forcibly than anything of a society in a state of dissolution, and corresponding to it a decaying literature.

One of Rutebœuf's best known satires, written between 1267 and 1270, represents a dispute between a crusader and a cavalier who had not taken the

¹ M. Moland says of him: "Il offre en effet la première individualité à peu près distincte de l'histoire de notre poésie. Nous commençons à entrevoir en lui, derrière le poète, l'homme dont la vie sert jusqu'à un certain point à expliquer les œuvres". (Crépet, I. 272).

² He had no Christian name. Rutebœuf of course is only a nickname.

cross, on the merits of crusading¹. The anti-crusader finally professes himself converted by his opponent, but he has so much the best of the argument that, whatever Rutebœuf's intention may have been, the poem is a remarkable testimony to the decline of the crusading spirit. In fact it had already received a rude shock in the defeat and captivity of St Louis in 1250, and in 1270 the very crusade, the preparation for which was going on when Rutebœuf's poem was written, ended in a second disaster and the death of the last crusading monarch. With the conquest of Acre, the last Christian possession in Palestine, in 1291, the epoch of the Crusades comes to an end. But in France the crusading spirit had utterly died out somewhat earlier. The accession of Philip the Fair (1289) marks the beginning of a new social and political era, and this date, almost coinciding, as it does, with the last appearance of Rutebœuf as a writer, may also be taken to mark the close of the creative period of French mediæval literature².

It is followed, as I have said, by a period of decline. It is true that in some forms of literature

¹ *La desputizons dou croisié et dou descroisié*. (Œuvres de Rutebœuf, i. 124). The *desputizons* or *débat* or *bataille* was a variety in dialogue of the *dit* or monologue, a name which was applied to *fabliaux* as well as to purely satirical pieces.

² See Crépet, i. 255, where M. Moland says of Rutebœuf "Les derniers vers qu'il a écrits, la *Complainte de sainte Église*, qu'on peut dater de 1286 environ, sont véritablement les *novissima verba*

there still is evidence of considerable vigour and developement, and there are two or three great names. But these signs of activity are of the future rather than of the past; they are the precursors of the next creative period rather than a survival of that which had passed away. It must always be so in the history of literature. There must from time to time recur periods, which are at once periods of decline and periods of preparation, when by the side of a literature, which, having lost all vitality, is slowly passing away with the phase of civilisation which gave birth to it, there is silently springing up a new growth, weakly at first and stunted, but destined one day to shoot up into a mighty tree, the emblem of a new order of civilisation. In literature, as in everything else in this world, the law of perpetual flux holds good.

The fourteenth century, as a period of French literature, may be said to open with the second part of the *Roman de la Rose*, the work of Jean de Meun¹. Its enormous popularity, which lasted

du *xiii^e* siècle." The second stanza quoted by M. Moland is as follows :

Puisque justice cloce, et drois pent et incline,
Et verités cancelle, et loiautés decline,
Et carités refroide, et fois faut et define,
Iou dit qu'il n'a ou monde fondement ne racine.

¹ The mention of Charles of Anjou as King of Sicily,

Qui par devine porvéance,

Est ores de Sesile rois, l. 7379 (ed. F. Michel),

fixes the date of these lines as being certainly earlier than January

down to the close of the sixteenth century, and the extravagant admiration with which its author was regarded, testify to the deep impression which it made. We could hardly have stronger evidence of the moral as well as of the literary decadence of the nation. The satire of Jean de Meun is not, like that of Rutebœuf, inspired by the hard and loveless life of the writer, neither is it tempered, like his, by a genuine appreciation of the good side of feudal society. It is the shameless cynicism of an avowed sensualist who views with disgust any restraint upon his desires, and is therefore the enemy alike of law and religion and the social code. Indeed such is the effrontery of the cynicism that one hardly wants external testimony to shew that the work was written in comparative youth. We therefore wonder less at what must be regarded as the bravado of a young man eager for notoriety, than at the corruption of an age which could receive his performance with enthusiasm, and look upon him with almost superstitious reverence¹.

1285, the date of Charles' death, and probably earlier than 1282, the date of the Sicilian vespers, to which otherwise we should expect some allusion to have been made. We have also strong evidence that the work was complete before the author's translation of Vegetius, one of the MSS. of which bears the date of 1284. See *Hist. Litt.* xxviii. 391—435 (by Paulin Paris).

¹ See for the influence of the *Roman de la Rose*, Crépet, i. 299 (L. Moland). Jean de Meun's other works were of a more serious description, such as translations of Vegetius, Boethius, and the letters of Abélard and Héloïse.

But it is with the literary and not with the moral point of view that I am concerned, and, clever though Jean de Meun's work is, as an artistic production it is wholly bad. In the first place he continues the allegorising spirit of his predecessor Guillaume de Lorris. The new personages whom he introduces on the scene are still pale abstractions instead of living flesh and blood. Faux-Semblant is sometimes compared with Tartuffe, but Faux-Semblant is a mere voice, a mere bundle of ideas and sentiments. Secondly, the superabundance of political allusion, the ostentatious parade of learning, the obvious purpose of the whole work, shew how far the writer was from being possessed by any artistic aim. The work is not a poem but a pamphlet. Thirdly, its very length, and the fatal facility with which it was evidently written, are incontestable signs of an overblown and decaying literature.

These three faults, love of allegory, writing with a didactic and not an artistic purpose, and inordinate prolixity, are traceable in nearly the whole literature of the fourteenth century. In *Renart le Novel*, which appeared in 1288, we have an example of the love of allegory. The didactic and moralising spirit is shewn by such poems as the *Métamorphoses d'Ovide moralisées* of Philippe de Vitry, bishop of Meaux, whom Petrarch called 'the sole poet of France': while the same poem, which reaches

71,000 lines, and *Renart le Contrefait*, the latest addition to the cycle of Reynard, with over 50,000 lines, are instances of the terrible prolixity of the period.

The lyric poets of this age are not less voluminous than their brethren. Guillaume de Machault and his pupil Eustache Deschamps have left between them nearly 200,000 verses, while Froissart found time, before he devoted himself to history, to throw off some 50,000. The facility, which this copiousness implies, is also visible in the form of their verse. The freshness and simplicity of the earlier songs have been exchanged for the polished, but somewhat pedantic, art of the *ballade* and the *rondeau*, and other fixed forms of verse. Much graceful poetry was written in these fixed forms, but too often ingenuity took the place of inspiration, and art degenerated into artificiality.

In short the literature of the fourteenth century is characterised by that unfailing sign of decadence, want of originality. Writers were content to work in the old lines, making no attempt to strike out new paths; and they almost invariably altered for the worse what they imitated. Thus the old poetical romances were either parodied, as in *Hugues Capet*, which is a *Chanson de Gestes* transformed into a heroi-comic poem, or they were refashioned, with change of rhythm and spelling and the introduction of long episodes, to suit the

taste of the age, as in the latest poetical form of *Huon de Bordeaux*; or thirdly, a new poem was formed by piecing together extracts from various old ones¹.

In the midst however of this general decay of literary taste, we can discover, as I said above, some signs of life, some promise of future excellence. In the first place the secular drama, the germ of which I have noticed as existing in the *Jeu de la Feuillie* of Adam de la Halle, continued slowly to develop. The formation of the Paris lawyers' clerks into a society, under the name of the *Clercs de la Bazoche*, which dates from about 1302, gave considerable impulse to play-acting, and though very few of the *farces*² (as their plays were called) that have come down to us belong to the fourteenth century, there can be no doubt that many were already written and played during this period. About 1380 the dramatic company of the *Enfans sans souci*, composed of young men of good family, was authorised by letters patent.

Secondly we may note a decided improvement in the style of French prose, which in the hands of Froissart attained, for descriptive and narrative purposes, a high degree of grace and vigour. It

¹ For the decadence of the poetical romances see Aubertin i. 260—263.

² The *farces* were often dramatised *fabliaux*. See *Hist. Litt.* xxiv. 453.

is only when it tries to express ideas, that its deficiency becomes apparent¹. This is only natural. From poetry to descriptive prose, from descriptive prose to logical prose, is the normal course of developement for every language².

The reign of Charles V. forms an interlude of rest between two terrible epochs of war and misgovernment. The temporary return to prosperity which France enjoyed under his wise and beneficent rule was not without its effect on literature. For although during his reign at least there was no visible progress, the seeds were sown of future improvement. It is from his reign that we must date the appearance in France of that preliminary classical revival, which, with reference to Italy, has, as I have said, been called by Mr Bryce 'the Roman Renaissance.' The king himself was a fair Latin scholar, and under his auspices several Latin works were translated into French. It was not however till the beginning of the fifteenth century that this revived interest in Latin classical literature began to have any effect upon the style of French prose.

The fifteenth century, as a period in French literature, is generally treated as a whole; but it is better to divide it. The accession of Louis XI.

¹ See on this point some good remarks by Mr Saintsbury, *Hist. of French Lit.* p. 153.

² There is a good sketch of the 14th cent. literature, by J. V. Leclerc, in the *Hist. Litt.* xxiv. 439—455.

(1461), whose reign like that of his prototype Philip the Fair marks the beginning of a new political epoch, is a good landmark also from the literary point of view. Taking then this date as the point of division we shall have two sub-periods of about equal length, the first beginning at 1404, the date of the appearance of Christine de Pisan's *Livre des Fais et bonnes Meurs du sage roi Charles V.*, the first prose work of any note written under the influence of Latin models¹, and ending at 1461; the other beginning at 1461 and ending at 1515.

The two periods, though they share some features in common, are sufficiently contrasted to justify their separation. The first is by far the more interesting of the two, for it is illustrated by several great or at least celebrated names, while the second period, if we except Philippe de Comines, whose memoirs were not published till after its close, in 1523, can shew nothing but third-rate writers, whose common characteristic is mediocrity. The first period represents the last expiring effort of mediæval literature, the second is a period of repose, or, to use an untranslatable French term, *recueillement*, during which France was silently preparing and strengthening herself for the Renaissance.

¹ On the 1st of January, 1404, Christine presented her poem of the *Mutation de Fortune*, as a new year's gift (*étrennes*) to the Duke of Burgundy, who then commissioned her to write a life of Charles V.

The fifteenth-century literature opens thus with Christine de Pisan, who, though in her poetry she is content to follow in the traces of her master Deschamps, as a prose writer makes an entirely new departure. This admirable woman, the prototype of so many of her sex, who, left widows at a comparatively early age¹, have painfully won a subsistence for themselves and their children by a life of literary toil, was by no means a woman of genius. But she was industrious, clever, and for her time exceedingly learned. There were few branches of literature or knowledge in which she did not turn her pen to account. It is only however with her influence on French prose that I am now concerned. This is what M. Aubertin has to say of her style. *It is full of big words, heavily translated from the Latin, which make it at once odd and obscure; she combines, in her outpourings of undigested learning, the nonsense of future Renaissance pedants with the subtleties of scholastic divisions and subdivisions. To all the defects of her own age she adds by anticipation those of the age following*². This is severe, and, I think, unjust. In favour of Christine it may fairly be said, first that whenever she is moved to eloquence her style not only shews considerable force and dignity, but becomes more lucid and

¹ Her husband, Thomas de Pisan, died in 1402, when she was eight or nine and thirty.

² Aubertin II. 273.

simple, and secondly that in her later prose writings a decided improvement may be traced. Thus it is rather by the *Lamentation sur les Maux de la guerre civile* (1410) and the *Livre de la Paix* (1412—1414) than by the history of Charles V. that we must judge of her capabilities as a writer. But even granted that what M. Aubertin says be true, French literature still owes to Christine de Pisan a large debt of gratitude, for it was she who first pointed out the true source of the regeneration of French prose, and the models after which it was to be refashioned in order to fit it for its great task of becoming the interpreter of Europe, of presenting in a language of crystal lucidity and logical precision the ideas of each European nation. Christine de Pisan was thus a worthy predecessor of Rabelais and Calvin and Amyot and Montaigne, and all those who carried on the work of fashioning French prose as a medium of thought as well as of narrative¹.

Her immediate successor was Alain Chartier, who in his patriotism, his pedantry, and his literary activity bears a strong resemblance to her. It is a well-known story how Margaret of Scotland, wife of the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XI., finding him

¹ For Christine de Pisan see R. Thomassy, *Essai sur les écrits politiques de C. de Pisan*, 1838. There is a good and appreciative notice of her in Mr Blades' *Caxton*, p. 195 and pp. 337—338 (2nd ed.).

one day asleep in a room through which she was passing, did honour to the lips 'from which so many golden words had issued,' by stooping to kiss them¹. And though now it is chiefly by this royal kiss that he is known, his fame by no means ended with his life. In the sixteenth century he was called the 'Father of French eloquence,' and the title well expresses the nature of his services to French prose literature. It was eloquence as well as logical precision which was wanting to French prose. It prattled charmingly, but it could not draw the long breath of a continuous discourse: it was vivid and picturesque in a remarkable degree, but it was wholly deficient in style, in the power of expressing noble and dignified thoughts in noble and dignified language. Now these qualities Alain Chartier, in spite of his pedantry and stilted cumbrousness, undoubtedly possessed: he had the power of sustained utterance and the feeling for style; in other words he had eloquence. There are many pages in his masterpiece, the *Quadriloge invectif*, which are not unworthy to stand beside the great speech of the Sieur d'Aubray in the *Satire Menippée*. We are

¹ The story is told by, among others, Estienne Pasquier, *Recherches de la France*, vi. c. 16, a chapter entitled '*Des mots douz et belles sentences de maistre Alain Chartier*'. For Chartier's life and writings see Delaunay, *Etude sur A. Chartier* (1876), and Gérubez, *Hist. de la Litt. f. r.* 230—242. The latest edition of his works (1 vol. 4to.) is of 1617. Caxton translated his *Curial* or *Courtier*.

told that his favourite author was Seneca, and it is to Seneca that Estienne Pasquier compares him. The connexion is noteworthy. The influence of Seneca in French literature has been considerable; on French tragedy it was in a great measure a harmful influence, but it was not so with regard to French prose. Seneca's faults are those of every artist of a silver age, of an age in which style is cultivated not for the sake of the thoughts of which it should be the setting, but for its own sake. But if Seneca ✓ had, so to speak, too much style, French prose had too little. Thus Chartier by taking him as a model shewed his appreciation of what was the great want of French prose—style; and though from not having the genius requisite for his task he failed himself in this work of regeneration, he at any rate pointed out to his mightier successors, to Rabelais and Montaigne and Pascal, the source from which that regeneration was to come. In the history then of French literature Alain Chartier has a right to an honourable place, not indeed as a great writer, but as one of those who have contributed to the forging of that keen and mighty weapon, French prose.

By the side of the latinised prose of Chartier and his followers the old picturesque narrative prose continued to flourish. At the close of this period we have three works of considerable reputation, the *Quinze Joyes du Mariage*, *Petit Jehan de*

Saintré, and the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, which competent judges seem to be agreed in assigning to one author, Antoine de la Sale, and in praising as among the best specimens of French mediæval prose¹. The numerous prose versions of the old poetical romances, which down to nearly the middle of the sixteenth century were the favourite reading of the whole of Europe, also belong to this period².

The other branch of French literature, besides narrative prose, which had shewn an upward tendency during the fourteenth century—the drama—still continued to progress during the fifteenth. The establishment by letters patent in 1402 of the *Confrérie de la Passion* as a recognised society

¹ Antoine de la Sale was born in Burgundy 1398, and served successively Louis III., Count of Provence, his successor René, and Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy. He wrote *Jehan de Saintré* in 1459. The *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* were told between 1456 and 1461 at the castle of Genappe in Flanders by Louis XI., then Dauphin, the Comte de Charolais, and their suite. The 50th story was told by A. de la Sale, who is supposed to have edited the collection, which was first printed in 1486 by A. Vérard. The *Quinze Joyes du Mariage*, also attributed to La Sale, is mentioned in the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* and must therefore be of earlier date. The oldest manuscript of it bears the date of 1464. See the introduction to the edition of the *Cent Nouv. Nouv.* by Bibliophile Jacob. The literary value of all these works is, I think, often exaggerated. I agree with Michelet that *Petit Jehan de Saintré* is an *œuvre ennuyeuse et pédantesque*. The *Quinze Joyes* is painfully cynical and the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* revoltingly coarse.

² Aubertin i. 266, 267.

for the performance of religious dramas, and the consequent erection of a stage in a huge hall of the hospital of the Trinity, gave France her first regular theatre; and the two forms of the mediæval religious drama, the mysteries and the miracle plays¹, displayed throughout this period a considerable accession of vitality. It was not till the second half of the century that the enormous length to which they, especially the mysteries, attained, shewed that they too had reached their period of decadence. The profane drama, in its three forms of the farce, the *sotie*, and the morality, was no less active. Of the hundred and fifty comedies or thereabouts of the French mediæval theatre that have been brought to light, the great majority belong to the fifteenth century, nor, as in the case of the religious drama, can we make any distinction between the earlier and later half of the century. The most celebrated piece of all, the immortal farce of *Patelin*, which, in spite of attempts to father it with the distinguished names of Villon and Antoine de la Sale, still remains anonymous, is assigned to various dates between 1460 and 1473². The flourishing period of mediæval comedy in fact lasted till the

¹ Originally the name *Mystère* was confined to pieces of which the subject was taken from the Bible, while the *Miracle* was a legend from the lives of the Saints; but in the fifteenth century this distinction was not always adhered to.

² Aubertin i. 541, 542. *Patelin* was printed at Rouen before 1486, at Paris in 1490.

close of the reign of Louis XII. (1515), when after a final outburst of activity during that reign it gradually passed away in company with its more decrepit religious sister.

The more persistent vitality of the secular as compared with the religious mediæval drama is one more example of the change which mediæval society and literature were undergoing, the decay of their religious and aristocratic elements, and the growth of their popular and secular elements. It is these more or less antagonistic forces that are represented by the two poets, who are the best known of all the writers of this period, and who, both ending their work almost exactly at its close, seem to sum up all the traditions of mediæval literature during the two preceding centuries¹.

Charles d'Orleans, the poet-prince, is the representative of the element of chivalry, of the courtly and graceful strains of lyric song, of the perfumed allegory of the first part of the *Roman de la Rose*. His poetry is the sweet swan's note of expiring feudalism. François Villon, the poet-vagabond, inherits, on the other hand, the traditions of the *fabliaux* and the *Roman du Renart*, of Rutebœuf and Jean de Meun. His poetry is the rude, but resolute, utterance of a voice that has played no

¹ C. d'Orleans died in 1465. Villon's last known work, the *Grand Testament*, was written in 1461. Nothing is known of him after this date.

small part in French history and literature, the voice of the French people. While the prince is wholly of the past, the vagabond is partly also of the future, and while the prince is merely the most graceful and polished representative of a class, the vagabond has that stamp of individuality which is the unfailing accompaniment of genius. It is this which has earned for Villon the title of France's first modern poet; but, in spite of that modern air which his strong individuality gives him, in his thought hardly less than in his method he belongs to the mediæval world.

Distinct both from the formal court poetry, of which Charles d'Orleans was the chief exponent, and from the poetry of the streets of Paris represented by Villon are the numerous anonymous popular songs¹ of the fifteenth century. Some of them silly enough, many of them ignoble and sensual, not a few of considerable charm and beauty, all fresh and spontaneous, they are interesting as the genuine expression of the social life of provincial France. In form, like the songs of most nations, they are

¹ 143 of these songs, in various dialects, many of them dating from near the close of the 15th century, have been published under the title of *Chansons du xv^e siècle* by M. Gaston Paris, for the *Société des anciens textes français*, from a MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The finest perhaps of all is the war-song beginning *Il fait bon veoir ces hommes d'armes* (p. 129), of the time of Charles VIII. or Louis XII. It is given by Mr Saintsbury in his *French Lyrics*, p. 57.

characterised by a plentiful use of the refrain. It is a species of poetry which has always flourished on French soil, and which at the beginning of this century found a great literary exponent in the person of Béranger.

The first period of the fifteenth century is to be regarded, as I have said, as the last expiring effort of mediæval literature. What Sainte-Beuve says with reference to the mystery-plays is true of the whole literature, *When things are near their end, they often have a season of splendour: it is their autumn, their vintage, their last firework*¹. The remaining period, which comprises the fifty-four years which elapsed before the accession of Francis I, is the most uninteresting in the whole of French literature. With the exception of the farce of Patelin and the anonymous songs already mentioned, and the delightful little tale of Jehan de Paris², there is hardly a single work of this period which has any interest for the general reader; and except Pierre Gringore, the author of the famous *Jeu et Sotie du Prince des Sots*, played in 1511 on Shrove-Tuesday before all Paris, Jean le Maire de Belges,

¹ "Quand les choses sont près de finir elles ont souvent une dernière saison toute florissante: c'est leur automne et leur vendange, c'est leur bouquet." *Poésie française au xvi^e siècle* (nouv. éd.), p. 172.

² M. A. de Montaiglon assigns it with great probability to the year 1492. See the preface to his edition (Paris, 1867). It was first printed about 1530.

and possibly Guillaume Coquillart, who, though he lived till 1510, was born in 1421, ten years before Villon, there is not a single writer of even respectable merit. It is not that there was any dearth of writers, or any stint in their productions, but bad taste and mediocrity reigned supreme. It was a literature of decrepitude, a shadowy survival, which preserved only the faults of the old mediæval literature, and intensified these into grotesqueness. Poetry was chiefly represented by the so-called *grands rhétoriciens*, many of whom enjoyed an enormous contemporary reputation. They affected the latinised language of Christine de Pisan and Alain Chartier, dealt largely in allegory, revelled in the difficulties of the *chant royal* and other highly artificial forms of verse, and, in the words of Mr Saintsbury, *produced some of the most intolerable poetry ever written*¹.

The same affectation and pedantry, the same striving after ingenuity, the same futile efforts to force the French language into a Latin mould,

¹ *Hist. of French Lit.* p. 165, and cf. Darmesteter et Hatzfeld, *Le xvi^e siècle en France* (1878), p. 82. "Rimer lourdement des chroniques plus ou moins historiques : écrire de froides allégories rappelant de très-loin le Roman de la Rose, le modèle du genre ; composer pour la cour fleureton, ballades, rondeaux, quatrains, huitains, dizains, cartels, mascarades, complaintes, &c., ou s'amuser à des tours de force de versification—alors l'idéal de l'art—aux rimes équivoquées, doublement équivoquées, brisées, couronnées, enchaînées, batelées &c....tel est l'art de ces maîtres révévés à l'égal des grands."

characterise the prose of the period, the lumbering chronicles of the historiographers of France and Burgundy. This is how Jean Molinet begins his *Chronicles* of the history of Burgundy:

La très-illustre et refulgente maison du seigneur et duc de Bourgogne est magnifiquement fondée sur les sommets des montagnes. Les gens terriens qui sont entendus les victorieux princes et regens et conducteurs du bien publique sont comme montaignes excelses où est assis le hault trosne d'honneur vers qui les nobles preux du siècle tournent la face et tendent bras et mains.

And Jean Molinet was much admired by his contemporaries¹.

A far simpler and better writer than Molinet, though not wholly free from the same affectation of using Latin words, is Claude de Seyssel² the author of *Les louenges du roy Louys xii^e* published in

¹ Jean Molinet (d. 1507) succeeded George Chastellain (1403—1475) as historiographer of the house of Burgundy. His chronicle extended from 1474 to 1504. He turned the *Roman de la Rose* into prose. He had also a great reputation as a poet, his poetry being chiefly composed of bad puns and other puerilities.

² C. de Seyssel, a native of Savoy (born about 1450), was professor of law at Turin when he was invited to France by Louis XII. He rose to high honour at the French court, being made a member of the state-council and a master of requests. He afterwards took orders and was made bishop of Marseilles, and finally archbishop of Turin, where he died in 1520. His translations of the Greek historians will be mentioned hereafter.

1508¹, though apart from its merits of style his work does not rise to a higher level than that of an uncritical panegyric. But about the year 1500 there was completed, though not published till 1523, an historical work of a very different quality from that of either Molinet or Seyssel, the *Memoirs of Philippe de Comines*².

Comines has been called the 'father of modern history', and the 'first really modern French writer.' But he deserves neither the one appellation nor the other. He is certainly not a modern writer, nor in the true sense of the word is he an historian. If it be said that he stands, as it were, on a bridge between the two worlds, mediæval and modern, it must be added that it is to the mediæval world that his face is turned. His *Memoirs*, truly says Arnold, *are striking from their perfect unconsciousness*:

¹ Republished in 1558 under the title of *L'histoire singulière du roy Loys*, &c., and again in 1615 by Godefroy with other records of the reign of Louis XII.

² P. de Comines was born about 1447 and died in 1511. His *Memoirs* embrace the reign of Louis XI. from 1465—1483 (books i.—vi.), and the Italian wars of Charles VIII. from 1493—1498 (books vii., viii.). Sainte Beuve has a good essay on him (*Causeries du Lundi*, i. 241 ff.). Mr Saintsbury's estimate of him (*Short history*, p. 161) is on the whole a just one, but the fact of Comines grasping 'the anti-feudal and therefore anti-mediæval conception of a central government' does not seem to be sufficient reason for classing him among the writers of the Renaissance period. See also Ranke's criticism from the historical point of view in *Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtschreiber* (Werke, xxxiv.), pp. 134—139.

*the knell of the Middle Ages had been already sounded, yet Comines has no other notions than such as they had tended to foster; he describes their events, their characters, their relations, as if they were to continue for centuries*¹. His style too is purely mediæval: it has neither a foretaste of the logical precision and clearness of later French prose, nor does it shew any trace of classical influences. Comines indeed knew neither Latin nor Greek, a fact alone which marks him as a child of the mediæval world and not of the Renaissance. Yet along with these unmistakeable signs of mediævalism there is to be found in him a vein of modern thought, a manner of looking at events, which, though it does not justify us in calling him the father of modern history, entitles him to be regarded as at least a forerunner of the modern historian. In the first place, unlike the older chroniclers, especially unlike Froissart, he cares neither for battles nor pageants nor other picturesque matters. What he cares for is not light and shade, but cause and effect; unravelling the web of tortuous statecraft; tracking the hidden springs of character. It is this inquiring spirit as well as his thoroughly anti-feudal attitude, his entire appreciation of the policy of his hero, which give him the air of a quasi-modern historian. But after all his book is not a history any more than it is a chronicle. It

¹ *Lectures on Modern History*, p. 118 (2nd ed.), and see pp. 110, 111.

is what he himself terms it—his Memoirs, the record of events of which he was an eye-witness. This is the real historical value of the book, that it is written by a man who was not only an eye-witness but a leading actor in most of the events which he relates, by a man who if not a profound statesman was at least a profound master of statecraft, who was skilled in reading the thoughts of those with whom in the conduct of affairs he came in contact, and who had thus learnt, not from books, but from men, the lessons in practical politics with which he points his narrative. But it is a history rather by accident than by design. It is as much a history as the Memoirs of Metternich, and no more. The great charm of Comines consists in his originality, in that mixture of *naïveté* and maliciousness which is the characteristic of the *esprit gaulois*, in his appreciation of the unheroic side of history, in his keen eye for character. But to call him ‘the father of modern history,’ or the French Machiavelli, or the French Tacitus, is to miss the peculiar flavour of this *bourgeois* minister of a *bourgeois* monarch.

Comines’ Memoirs are the single bright spot in the literary desert of the close of the Middle Ages. But dreary though the period is from the point of view of literary production, it is by no means unimportant from that of literary developement. I shall shew in a future chapter how the material prosperity which the country enjoyed during this period, the

strong central government and political unity established by Louis XI., and the contact with Italy caused by the invasions of Charles VIII. and Louis XII., were all powerful agencies in preparing the soil for the Renaissance. But there are two events that fall within this period which have a more immediate bearing upon literature, are indeed two of the most important landmarks in the whole history of French literature. One, I need hardly say, is the introduction of printing, the other is the revival of Greek. It is to the printing of books, and the study of the ancient masterpieces, not to its pretentious poems and histories, that the true literary value of the period is due. The work was not indeed carried on with such activity as it was during the reign of Francis I., but the ground was thoroughly broken up, the good seed was sown. Before the end of the period France had a distinguished Greek scholar of her own, Budé, and a distinguished printer, Jodocus Badius Ascensius, both of whom stood beyond dispute in the first rank of European humanists¹.

¹ Badius, though a Fleming by birth, had adopted France as his home.

CHAPTER IV.

MEDIÆVAL LEARNING.

§ 1. *The Paris University.*

Authorities. The chief authority is Bulæus (Du Boulay), *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis* (1673, 6 vols. fol.); Crévier, *Histoire de l'Université de Paris* (1761, 6 vols. 12mo.), is a good arrangement of Bulæus' matter with very complete index; Thurot, *De l'organisation de l'enseignement dans l'Université de Paris au moyen âge* (1850), is a thesis of much learning derived from the registers in the University archives and from other original documents, sometimes inaccurate in the citation of authorities; Jourdain, *Index chronologicus chartarum pertinentium ad historiam Univ. Parisiensis* (1862), is a useful collection of the original charters. See also Savigny, *Geschichte des Römischen Rechts*, III. XXI., useful for the constitution; Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de l'instruction publique en Europe &c.* (1849—1852), especially ch. III.; and P. Lacroix (Bibliophile Jacob), *Sciences et lettres au moyen âge et à l'époque de la renaissance* (1877), pp. 1—45, both lively sketches, with illustrations, of the University in the middle ages, the former being better for the studies, the latter for the general life and manners; Meiners, *Geschichte der hohen Schulen* (Göttingen, 1802, 4 vols.), with much various and interesting information, which unfortunately is frequently inaccurate.

For the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there are admirable notices in the *Histoire Littéraire*, vols. IX. XVI. and XXIV. by Dom Rivet, Daunou and I. V. Leclerc respectively, while Mullinger, *University of Cambridge*, Part I. (1873), and *Munimenta Academica* (Rolls Series, ed. Anstey) are useful for purposes of comparison between Paris and our own Universities.

For the general characteristics of scholasticism I have con-

sulted A. Jourdain, *Recherches sur les anciennes traductions d'Aristote* (1843, new ed. by C. Jourdain). Hauréau, *De la philosophie scolastique* (1850). Cousin, *Hist. de la philosophie au XVIII^e siècle*, 9^{me} leçon. Ueberweg, *Hist. of Philosophy* (English Translation, 1872), i. 355—467. Schwegler (Stirling's translation, 7th ed.), p. 144. Prantl, *Geschichte der Logik*, of which 4 vols. only are published (Leipsic, 1855—1870), and Mullinger as before. From the writings of Vives, especially *De causis corruptarum artium* in vol. vi. of the *Works* (Valentia, 1782—1790); and of Ramus, especially the *Scolae in literales artes* (Basle 1578); the letters of Erasmus, including a remarkable letter from Sir Thomas More to Martin Dorpius, in his *Works* (Leyden, 1703—6), iii. pp. 1892—1916; the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum*, and the immortal work of Rabelais, much interesting and valuable contemporary information may be obtained on the whole question of mediæval learning.

Though the existence of the Paris University as an incorporated body with a recognised legal status only dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century, Paris had long before been famous as a great centre of education. At the end of the eleventh century the lectures of William of Champeaux in the school of Notre Dame attracted crowds of students. But his fame was soon eclipsed by that of his pupil and rival Abélard. The multitudes who thronged to hear him on the hill of Sainte Geneviève came from all parts of Europe¹. Among

¹ Nulla terrarum spatia, nulla montium cacumina, nulla concava vallium, nulla via, difficili licet obsita periculo et latrone, quominus ad te properarent, retinebant. Anglorum turbam juvenem mare interjacens et undarum procella terribilis non terrebat, sed omni periculo contempto, audito tuo nomine, ad te confluebat. (Foulques, prior of Deuil, to Abelard, quoted in Dom Bouquet xiv. 281.)

his hearers were Guido di Castello, afterwards Pope Celestine II.; Arnold of Brescia, who was protected by Pope Celestine II. and burnt by Adrian IV.; Peter the Lombard, afterwards bishop of Paris, who in his turn became famous as a teacher, and whose *Sentences* were throughout the middle ages one of the most approved text-books in the Paris schools¹, and our own countryman John of Salisbury². Throughout the twelfth century the great schools of Notre Dame, Sainte Geneviève, and St Victor, with others of less note, maintained their celebrity. *Paris*, in the words of Dom Rivet, *became a second Athens*. Nearly half the Popes of the century owed part of their education to her schools. Englishmen especially frequented them. To John of Salisbury, already mentioned, we must add Archbishop Thomas, Giraldus Cambrensis, Walter Map, Nicholas Breakspear, afterwards Pope Adrian IV., Stephen Langton, Edmund Rich, Alexander of Hales, Robert Grosseteste³, Matthew Paris, Michael Scott, and Roger Bacon, all of whom were students, many lecturers, at Paris, between 1230 and 1330⁴.

¹ See Hauréau, *La Philosophie Scolastique*. (Paris, 1850) I. 330.

² His *Metalogicus* (bk. II. c. 10) is the chief authority for the educational life of Paris at this time. It is largely quoted by Dom Rivet in his admirable account in the *Histoire Littéraire*, IX. See also Wright, *Biog. Lit.* II. 230.

³ Dr Luard in his preface to Grosseteste's letters (Rolls Series) points out that Bulæus is the only authority for his having been a student at Paris.

⁴ They all find a place by *droit d'aubaine* in the *Hist.*

By the middle of the twelfth century the number of students was so large that popular exaggeration could speak of them as outnumbering the rest of the citizens. Before long their great power and pretensions, and the consequent jealousy between them and the townspeople, which led to frequent scenes of uproar and bloodshed, ending, at least on one occasion, in a temporary secession of many of the students¹, rendered it necessary that their position should be determined by legislation. No positive act of incorporation has been preserved, but early in the thirteenth century we find the schools of Paris definitely incorporated into a University².

Littéraire. When Henry II. went to Paris in 1254, he was received with great splendour by the English students, of whom Matthew Paris says, 'erat numerus adventantium et obviantium infinitus' *Chron. Maj.* (Rolls Series, ed. Luard), v. 477.

¹ See Walter Map, *De nugis Curialium* (Camden Soc.), v. 217, and Matthew Paris's account of a riot between the citizens and the students in 1229 which resulted in the secession of a large body of students to Angers (*Chron. Maj.* iii. 166-8).

² The earliest existing documents recognising the existence of the Paris University as a corporation are an ordinance of Philip Augustus of the year 1200 (*Jourd. Index*, no. 1), exempting the students from the jurisdiction of the provost of Paris, and a bull of Innocent III. of 1203 (*Jourd.* no. 11.) authorising the students to be represented by an agent (*procuratorem ad agendum aut defendendum*). The term '*universitas*' first occurs in a bull of Innocent III. of 1211, which is inserted in the concordat made in 1213 between the University and the Chancellor of Notre-Dame through the mediation of the Bishop of Troyes (*Jourd.* no. xv.), but it is used with qualifying words—*universitas doctorum et scolarium*. It is not till 1262, in a bull of Urban IV., that we find *Universitas Parisiensis* used

In this transition from a loosely connected aggregate of schools to a single compact university, one important feature of which definite traces have been preserved is the emancipation from that jurisdiction, which every ecclesiastical corporation claimed to have over the schools within its limits, this jurisdiction in the case of the high schools being exercised by the Chancellor of the corporation¹. Thus the schools of Paris, out of which the University sprang, being situated for the most part within the limits of the Church of Notre-Dame or of the Abbey of Sainte Geneviève, were subject to the jurisdiction of the Chancellor of one or other of these corporations. But we hear most of the pretensions of the Chancellor of Notre Dame, who seems to have pushed his educational jurisdiction far beyond the actual territory of the Chapter which he represented. No one could open a school at Paris without his permission, and this permission or absolutely without any such qualifying words being either expressed or implied (Jourd. no. CLXXXIX.). In the Ordinance of Philip Augustus the title used is 'Schools of Paris,' a title which appears in various decrees of the thirteenth century. Another title was *studium generale*, i.e. a place of study open to all the world.

¹ The Chancellor was originally the Secretary to the Chapter. In the eleventh and earlier part of the twelfth century the superintendence of the episcopal school was in the hands, not of the *cancellarius*, but of the *scholasticus* or *magister scholarum*, an officer appointed by the bishop. See *Revue des questions historiques*, April 1, 1876, p. 573, an article entitled *La licence d'enseigner et le rôle de l'écolâtre au moyen âge*, by G. Bourbon.

licence, as it was called, was frequently either arbitrarily refused or only granted on payment of a fee¹. But in a Lateran council held in the year 1179 Pope Alexander III. decreed that no one should take money for a licence, or refuse to grant it to any fit person². This decree was by no means rigidly adhered to by the Chancellors, and there were frequent disputes between them and the nascent University. In 1215 however the Bishop and the Dean and Chapter of Paris passed a statute which restrained the power of their officer within due limits, and this statute was in the same year confirmed by the Papal Legate, Robert de Courçon, in a document which also contained various regulations concerning the teaching and discipline of the University³. An additional reason for the Chancellor's interference was the fact that the University, having no seal of its own, was obliged, when occasion required, to borrow that of the Chapter, which was kept by the Chancellor. But in 1225 the University established a seal of its own, the right to use which was, after a fierce dispute with the Chapter, confirmed by the Pope⁴. From this possession of a common seal the existence of the University as a legally constituted

¹ The *licence d'enseigner* is first heard of in the twelfth century, *ib.*

² *Pro licentiâ dicendi nullus omnino pretium exigat...nec docere quemquam expetitâ licentiâ, qui sit idoneus, interdicat*, Bul. II. 430.

³ Bul. III. 79—82.

⁴ Bul. III. 118, 119.

corporate body may be said to date, but, as we have seen, it virtually existed, even as a corporation, some years before. It is the glory of the Paris University that it was not called into being by the stroke of a royal pen, but that it grew of itself.

Nothing testifies more to the importance and universality of Paris as a place of learning in the middle ages than the division into nations. While at Oxford the two nations, the Northern and the Southern, had reference solely to English geography, the four nations at Paris, of France, England¹, Picardy and Normandy embraced the whole of civilised Europe. Though this division is mentioned for the first time in a public document in a bull of Innocent IV. of 1245, it existed, at any rate as a working arrangement, in the twelfth century².

For the next century and a half the fame of Paris as a place of education remained undiminished. The other leading Universities, Oxford, Bologna, Salerno, acknowledged her supremacy. But it was in spite of herself that she maintained it. For it was to sit at the feet of the great Schoolmen that

¹ In 1431 the name of Germany was substituted for that of England, but the latter name was used in official documents till 1455 (Thurot). The division into nations is still preserved, for the purpose of electing a Rector, in the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen.

² In 1169 Henry II. offered to submit his differences with Becket to the scholars of the various provinces of Paris (*scolaribus diversarum provinciarum*), Rad. de Diceto, i. p. 337. (Rolls Series, ed. Stubbs.)

foreigners now frequented her schools, and for many years she resisted to the utmost the admission of the mendicant orders, to which all the great Schoolmen belonged, within her body¹. But the mendicants, supported by Pope Alexander IV., gained the victory. On the same day in 1257 the Dominican, Thomas Aquinas, and the Franciscan, Bonaventura, received from the University the degree of doctor in theology. The fame of their teaching and that of their successors continued to attract students from all countries. Brunetto Latini, the master of Dante, spent seven years at Paris, and Dante himself heard lectures in that Rue de Fouarre—the Street of the Schools—which has found a place in his immortal poem². Some twenty years after Dante

¹ Matt. Par. mentions several dissensions between the University and the Dominicans during the years 1253—1259. On two of these occasions, in 1255 and 1257, there was a general secession from Paris on the part of the University (*Chron. Maj.* v. 416, 506, 528, 645, 743).

² Essa è la luce eterna di Sigieri
Che, leggendo nel vico degli strami,
Sillogezzò invidiosi veri. *Par.* ~~III~~ ^X

Dante's sojourn at Paris as a student is related by all his biographers. See Scartazzini, *Dante's Zeit Leben und Werke*, p. 382, and Fraticelli, *Storia della vita di D.* p. 176. They give 1309 as the date of his coming to Paris.

The Rue de Fouarre in which the schools of the faculty of Arts were situated is supposed to have been so called from the straw (*fouarre* or *feurre*) with which they were strewn for the students to sit on. (See *Hist. Littéraire*, xxi. Article on Siger by I. V. Leclerc.) It is mentioned by Babelais, *Pant.* ii. c. 10. Petrarch calls it in one place the *strepidulus* and in another the *fragosus straminum vicus*.

came Petrarch. Boccaccio was born at Paris, but it is doubtful whether he ever studied there.

The first half of the fourteenth century was the epoch of the foundation of colleges. A natural result of the great influx of students to Paris was a scarcity of lodging accommodation. The high rents were a heavy tax on their slender purses, and the absence of all discipline was equally prejudicial to their morals¹. The first attempt to remedy this state of things was the foundation of *hospitia* or hostels, where first free lodging, and then free board were provided for poor scholars, who lived there under the superintendence of a master, and were taken by him to and from the lectures in the Rue de Fouarre. But in these hostels there was no teaching. The first regular college, that is to say, a place where students were taught as well as boarded, was the famous Sorbonne, founded in 1250 for poor students in theology by Robert de Sorbon, confessor to Louis IX. This was the only college founded in the thirteenth century. The next in date was that of Cardinal Le Moine founded in 1302. Then in 1304 came Navarre, destined to rival the Sorbonne in importance. Others quickly sprang up in the 'Latin Quarter' round the hill of Sainte Geneviève. By the middle of the fourteenth century at least five and twenty colleges had been founded. To

¹ See the frequently cited testimony of Cardinal de Vitry in his *Historia Occidentalis* (*Hist. Litt.* xviii. 234).

found a college had become a fashionable act of piety¹.

After this the work considerably slackened, for evil days had come on the University. Between Crécy (1346) and the peace of Brétigny (1360) France, smitten with the triple scourge of war, pestilence, and domestic sedition, was in no favourable condition for the pursuit of learning. Paris, which under its hero Etienne Marcel became the head-quarters of revolt, especially suffered. Petrarch visiting it in 1361 draws a melancholy picture of the change he found in its appearance². The reign of Charles V. (1363—1380) restored a large measure of order and prosperity to the country. Being himself a man of letters and a fair Latin scholar³, he shewed especial favour to the University, conferring on her, with other privileges, the title of the eldest daughter of the Kings of France⁴. To his reign may be traced an increase in the political importance of the University, due in a great measure to Nicolas Oresme, the principal of the college of Navarre and the most learned Frenchman of his

¹ Six Colleges were founded at Cambridge during the first half of the fourteenth century—Michael House, Clare Hall, King's Hall, Pembroke, Gonville Hall, Trinity Hall and Corpus Christi; and three at Oxford, Exeter, Oriel and Queen's.

² *Ep. de rebus senilibus* lib. x. (*Works*, Basle, 1554, p. 963.)

³ Christine de Pisan, *Hist. de Charles V.* Pt. II. c. 6.

⁴ Cf. *ib.* Pt. III. c. 13, where Charles calls the University his *très amée fille*.

day, who was high in Charles' favour. After Oresme three remarkable *alumni* of the same college of Navarre, who were at once courtiers, men of learning and reformers, Pierre d'Ailly, and Jean Gerson, successively chancellors of the University, and Nicolas Clamanges fully maintained the influence of the University in political matters¹. It was owing to them that in the councils of Pisa and Constance the University played so distinguished a part. In spite too of the disorder and frequent outbreaks of sedition which characterised the reign of Charles III, the University appears to have enjoyed a tolerable state of internal prosperity, though the foundation of Universities at Prague (1348), Vienna (1365), and Cologne (1388), must have drawn off a considerable number of students. On the outbreak of the civil war between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs in 1410 Paris became once more a scene of desolation. Then came the renewal of the war with England and the fatal day of Agincourt. In the year 1420, in which Henry V. entered Paris in triumph, the University was at her lowest ebb. Her schools were deserted, her colleges were falling to ruin.

With the decline of the English power after the death of Henry V. the University began again to hold up her head. We find her at once actively

¹ Cr  vier says that the period of the Papal schism (1378—1417) was that of the greatest influence of the University.

supporting the council of Basle abroad and making great efforts to re-establish peace at home, while at the assembly of the Gallican Church at Bourges her deputies were among the most ardent supporters of the Pragmatic Sanction. The return of peace restored in some measure her educational as well as her political credit. But neither Charles VII. nor his successor Louis XI. were favourably disposed to her, and they both encouraged the foundation of new Universities, which must have tended greatly to diminish the number of her students¹. Still in the reign of Louis XI. we find them variously estimated at ten and twelve thousand², and at the end of the century, though her splendour was somewhat diminished, she was once more recognised as the first University in Christendom³, a position which she maintained till the outbreak of the Civil Wars. But though some foreigners still found their way there, her students were drawn now almost entirely from France. She had become a national instead of a European institution.

¹ Poitiers, Caen, Valence, Nantes, Bourges, Bordeaux were all founded between 1431 and 1472. Several foreign Universities, Louvain, Freyburg, Basle, Ingolstadt, Tübingen, Mainz, were also founded during this period.

² For the numbers of the University see Appendix B. It will be as well however to say here that the numbers given above include much more than what we in our Universities understand by students. For this period the average annual number of bachelor's degrees in arts was under 300 (Thurot, p. 40 note).

³ *Academiae omnium regina Lutetia* (Erasmus, III. 127).

Having thus given a brief sketch of the history of the University, I must say a few words about its constitution.

The government was entirely in the hands of the professors, not, as at Bologna, in the hands of the students. The technical term for the professors was, as it still is at Oxford, regents (*regentes*), the doctors who were not engaged in teaching being distinguished by the name of non-regents. The regents alone met in the ordinary assemblies or congregations, but on special occasions the non-regents were also summoned¹. They voted not individually, but through their nation or faculty, the voting units being the four nations and the three superior faculties of theology, canon law, or *decretorum*², and medicine.

At one time the only recognised division of the University had been that into nations, but, as a result of the quarrel with the mendicant orders, the three above-named faculties had separated themselves from the nations, and had come to be legally recognised as distinct bodies. Gradually the four nations, while retaining their four votes in the congregation and all the privileges of the original body,

¹ The assemblies in which only the regents took part were called *comitia generalia*, the others *comitia generalissima*. Bul. iii. 658. Till quite recently the Senate at Cambridge used to vote in two 'houses', that of the regents, and that of the non-regents.

² So called from the *Decretum* of Gratian published in 1151.

were regarded as a fourth faculty, which was usually called the faculty of arts, but not unfrequently the faculty of philosophy, and sometimes the faculty of grammar. The three faculties proper were then called in distinction the superior faculties, not from any superiority in power or status, but because they represented branches of study which were considered superior to that of arts¹. At the head of each of the superior faculties was a dean². The three deans with the rector and the four proctors (*procuratores*), who were still chosen exclusively from the nations, formed a tribunal which took cognisance of matters of discipline. There was also an older tribunal composed of the rector and proctors alone, which had a similar jurisdiction, but confined to the bachelors and undergraduates³. The rector was looked upon

¹ They are still called the superior faculties at Oxford and Cambridge. The origin of the faculties and whether they existed previous to the separation from the nations are questions which have never been thoroughly cleared up. But two points seem certain, one, that the term faculty originally meant, not the body of doctors in any branch of learning, but the branch of learning itself; the other, that some sort of association between the doctors of each of the four branches of learning must have existed before these associations took their places as distinct and recognised elements of the University constitution. Thus Matthew Paris says of John de Cella, who became Abbot of St Albans in 1195, that he *ad electorum consortium magistrorum meruit attingere* (*Gesta abbatum S. Albani*, ed. Riley i. 217). See the whole question discussed in Bul. ii. p. 562—569; Crévier, vii. 115—136; Thurot, pp. 13—18.

² There are deans of faculties in the Scotch Universities.

³ Crévier, vii. 75.

as the head of the University. From the year 1400 his term of office was for three months. The University in its corporate capacity for a long time claimed to be subject only to the jurisdiction of the king, but on an appeal being made to Charles VII. in support of this claim he formally vested the jurisdiction in the parliament of Paris, a body which the University had always looked upon with great jealousy. The two Chancellors of Notre-Dame and Sainte Geneviève, who in early times had, as we have seen, exercised supreme jurisdiction over the schools within their respective limits, had no longer any rights over the University but that of conferring the *licence* or degree of licentiate¹.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century the government of the University had passed almost entirely into the hands of the large colleges. It had

¹ The *licence* is the oldest university degree. Originally meant, as we have seen, a permission to teach, no one being allowed to open a school within the limits of a chapter without permission from the chancellor (see p. 80). The degree of *baccalaureus*, the name of which first appears in 1231, denoted that the possessor of it was in a state of training for the *licence*, during which he had to lecture under the eye of a master. It was obtained by an act called *determinatio*, from *determinare* (sc. *questionem*), to preside over a disputation. The degree of *master* was not properly a university degree. It signified the reception of the licentiate, or the licensed teacher, into the privileged body of masters. It was therefore conferred by the faculty itself. *Doctor*, which originally denoted a master actually engaged in teaching, became in time synonymous with *master*. (See Bul. v. 858, 859, ii. 681, 682. Crév. iv. 195, 196.)

come about in this way. Originally the colleges had confined their teaching to the students within their walls, all of whom were at once *boursiers* (*bursarii*), and on the foundation (*socii*)¹. There still remained a large number of students outside the colleges, who lived in what were called *pédagogies* under the charge of private tutors (*pédagogues*) and attended the lectures in the Rue de Fouarre or the schools of the superior faculties. But the advantages of the college discipline were so manifest that pensioners (*pensionnaires*) or paying students were in time introduced into the colleges. Navarre at the beginning of the fifteenth century was the first to make this change: at the same time its lectures were thrown open to the whole University². The *pédagogies* too seem to have become affiliated to the colleges, and sometimes a *pédagogue* rented part of the college buildings, and lived there with his pupils³. Thus at the time with which we are concerned all the students were either actually residing within the walls of the colleges or under their jurisdiction. The few unattached students were called *Martinets*⁴.

In the reign of Louis XI. we are told by Bulæus

¹ Launoy, *Regii Navaræ Gymnasii Historia* (1677), p. 104.

² Pasquier, *Recherches* ix. c. 17. See also the curious copy of a lease (*bail de pédagogie*) of 1506 between the college of La Marche and a professor of the college (Jourd. Index, no. mclxvi.).

³ There are still 'bursaries' in the Scotch Universities.

⁴ Pasquier, *Recherches* ix. c. 17.

that there were eighteen colleges *de plein exercice* (*collegia magna, famosa*) and eighty small ones (*parva, non famosa*)¹. In the former teaching was provided in at least all the branches of the faculty of arts: in the latter it was confined to the two primary studies of grammar and rhetoric. The teaching was now thrown completely into the hands of the colleges. The schools in the Rue de Fouarre were deserted or only used as examination rooms². The principals appointed whom they pleased as professors, sometimes being paid for the appointment, and the old custom that no one could be admitted to the professoriate without formally petitioning his faculty or, if he were a doctor in arts, his nation *pro regentibus et scholis* gradually fell into neglect. But the college professors enjoyed the full privileges of regents, and as members of the governing body completely swamped the regents who had been appointed by the faculties or nations, but did not belong to the educational body of any college. Thus the whole power of the University had become vested in the large colleges, for the professors of grammar and rhetoric, who were the only professors in the small colleges, did not rank as regents³.

¹ There is a list of about 50 colleges in Vallet de Viriville, pp. 166, 167.

² Ramus in 1562 speaks of the last professor of the Rue de Fouarre having recently died. (*Sur la reformation de l'Univ. de Paris, Archives Curieuses* 1^e Série iv. 134).

³ They were not admitted to the rank of regents till 1535.

By far the most powerful of the colleges were the Sorbonne and Navarre. The Sorbonne is too well known to need any testimony to its importance here, and its name will often occur in these pages in connexion with the new learning. It may be as well however to caution my readers that it is a mistake to speak of the Sorbonne as if it were identical with the faculty of theology. It consisted indeed exclusively of theological doctors and students, and the students of all the other colleges, except Navarre, attended its theology lectures; but though the majority perhaps of the doctors of theology belonged to it they did not all belong to it, and it had students as well as doctors; it thus included both more and less than the faculty of theology.

The college of Navarre¹ had steadily kept to the course marked out for it by Nicolas Oresme and his successors. It had always been in high favour with the court, and had enjoyed almost exclusively the privilege of providing tutors for the royal princes. This courtly atmosphere, and, to its honour it must be added, the high standard of discipline which it always maintained² made it the Trinity of Paris, at once the most popular and the most fashionable college. Henry III, Henry IV, and Henry of Guise

¹ See Launoy, *Reg. Nav. Gym. Hist.*

² For the excellence of its discipline see a speech of the Rector of the University in 1484. (Launoy, Pt. I. p. 447.)

were fellow-students there¹. It is said to have had at one time seven hundred students, but probably this included the shoe-blacks. Other leading colleges were Le Moine, Harcourt, Lisieux, Du Plessis, Dormans, Beauvais, Sainte Barbe and Montaigu.

At the beginning of the reign of Francis I. the other Universities of France were far inferior in repute to that of Paris, though some of them soon became formidable rivals. They were twelve in number: Toulouse, Montpellier, Orleans, Cahors, Angers, Grenoble, Poitiers, Caen, Valence, Nantes, Bourges and Bordeaux. I have given the names in order of foundation. Montpellier was celebrated for its school of medicine; Toulouse and Orleans for their law schools. To these may be added five others which eventually belonged to France: Avignon, Orange, Perpignan, Aix and Dôle, afterwards transferred to Besançon².

Besides the Universities or high schools there were elementary or grammar schools, attached, as the high schools had originally been, to the cathedral, or abbey, or sometimes to the parish church, within the jurisdiction of which they were situated. But while the high schools had become independent

¹ Matthieu, after saying that Henry IV. was at the College of Navarre, adds, 'Il y eut pour compagnons le Duc d'Anjou qui fut son Roy et le Duc de Guise qui le voulut être'. *Hist. de France*, (1631), III. 113.

² See Rabelais' humorous account of these provincial Universities. (Pant. II. c. v.)

corporations, the grammar schools were still subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which in their case was exercised by the precentor (*cantor, chantre*) instead of the chancellor. Frequently however his authority was delegated to a person who was called the *grand maître* or head-master. In Paris all the grammar schools were under the precentor of Notre Dame. They were of two kinds, the *écoles petites* or *françaises* for both sexes, and the *écoles grandes* or *latines* for boys only¹. In the former were taught reading, writing and church singing. In the *écoles latines*, says Thurot, it appears that the boys were divided into three classes. The third or lowest class, besides reading and writing, learnt the elements of Latin grammar in Donatus *de octo partibus orationis*, and read in Cato's *Disticha de moribus*, a collection of moral precepts in hexameters which throughout the Middle Ages and down to the middle of the seventeenth century was regarded as indispensable to a polite education². Another writer hardly less popular as an instructor of youth, was the English-born Joannes de Garlandiâ, a Latin versifier and grammarian of the thirteenth century, whose *Facetus*, *Morale Scholarium* and *Distichium sive Cornutus* were of much the same nature as Cato's work but far below it in merit³. In the second class the Latin

¹ Vallet de Viriville, pp. 199—210.

² See Appendix C.

³ See App. C. Erasmus says, "Deum immortalem! quale

grammar in use was the *Doctrinale* of Alexander Gallus or De Villâ Dei, a Paris professor and monk of the thirteenth century. It was based on Priscian and written in Leonine verses¹. Another work by the same writer was also used in this class. It was entitled *Carmen de algorismo*, and was, as its name implies, a treatise in verse on the seven elementary operations of addition, subtraction, doubling, halving, multiplication, division and the extraction of roots, which were collectively known as algorism. In this class they also learnt the rules of Latin versification², and what was dignified by the name of rhetoric, namely the proper method of addressing letters to persons of title. In the first class they began logic in the famous *Summulæ*, or abridgement of the *Organon* of Petrus Hispanus. A great many boys it must be remembered did not go to a Latin school at all, but after a slight preparation either at home or in an *école petite* went straight to the University

sæculum erat hoc quum magno apparatu Disticha Ioannis Garlandini adolescentibus, operosis et prolaxis commentariis enarrabantur." (De pueris instituendis. *Works* i. 514.)

¹ For Alexander Gallus see App. C. A catalogue of the library of Charles Duc de Berry, the younger brother of Louis XI., when eight years old, has been preserved. It comprises an A.B.C, Seven Penitential Psalms, a Donatus, an Accidence, a Cato, and a Doctrinal. (Vallet de V., p. 206.)

² Cardinal d'Estouteville in his statutes of 1452, by which the University was still governed at the opening of our period, prescribes that no one shall begin logic till he has learnt the art of versification. (Bul. v. 555 ff.)

at the age of eight or nine, some indeed as early as six¹. In many of the colleges there were bursaries, (seventy in all, says Thurot), set apart for the grammarians, as those who were not advanced enough to begin the regular academic course in arts were called. This course was generally begun at the age of twelve or thirteen. It lasted three years and a half. The first two years were devoted to logic, the first being spent chiefly in the study of the *Summulæ*, the second in that of the *Organon* itself with Porphyry's *Introduction* and Boëthius' *Topica*. The first-year students were called *summulistæ*, the second-year *logici*. At the end of the second year the baccalaureat was taken. The studies of the third-year students (*physici*) were physics, the Nicomachean Ethics, and a smattering of mathematics and astronomy. The latter was generally called *sphærica* or *la sphère*, the favourite text-book being the *Sphæricum opus* of Joannes de Sacro Bosco, an Englishman who in the thirteenth century was for several years a professor at Paris². The *licence* was taken at the end of the third year. Half a year later followed the master's degree (*maitrise*), involving two separate acts or ceremonies; first the *inceptio* or reception of the licentiate by the masters of his nation, and secondly the investiture of the

¹ Montaigne was only six when he went to the University of Bordeaux.

² For Joannes de Sacro Bosco see App. C.

inceptor with the *bonnet magistral* in the presence of the same body¹. The student who had hitherto borne the title of *dominus* was henceforth dignified with that of *magister*. The crowning honour remained, that of admission to the professorial body. Formerly it had been requisite that the newly-made master should present a formal request to the regents of his nation for admission, and for a school to be assigned to him to teach in. But, as we have seen, this custom had fallen into disuse, and the appointment to the professoriate now rested with the heads of the colleges.

But the arts course was only preparatory to the higher study of theology. It was theology that gave such lustre to the University of Paris. Her school of medicine was inferior to that of Montpellier; her school of law, which was confined to the canon law², ranked far below that of Bologna, below those of Toulouse and Orleans. But in theology she reigned supreme³. It was to the study of theology that her two most influential colleges, the Sorbonne and Navarre, '*the two porticos of orthodoxy*' (as Budé calls them), were, the Sorbonne exclusively, and Navarre to

¹ See a woodcut, representing this ceremony, in P. Lacroix.

² The civil law was not admitted till the year 1679.

³ "*Expectabatur sententia Parisiensis Academiæ quæ semper in re Theologicâ non aliter principem tenuit locum quam Romana sedes Christianæ religionis principatum.*" (Erasmus, *Works* III. 600.) At this time however Louvain did not rank much below Paris as a theological school (see More to Dorpius, *ib.* III. 1896).

a great extent, devoted¹. The Paris degree of doctor in theology was the most coveted academical distinction of the day. But to obtain it a long and laborious training was necessary. The theological course extended over 14 years. For six years the student attended lectures on the Bible and the *Sentences*. Then he became a bachelor, for which degree he had to be at least 25 years of age, and served his apprenticeship as a lecturer. There were three grades of bachelors, the *biblici*, who lectured on the Bible, of whom some were *biblici ordinarii*, the rest *cursores* or extraordinary lecturers; the *sententiarii*, who lectured on the *Sentences*; and the *firmati*, who had to preach sermons and hold conferences, and occasionally to dispute. One of these disputations, which was known as the *Acte de Sorbonique*, lasted from six in the morning to six at night without even an interval for food². The length of the bachelor's stage altogether was eight years. The last year was occupied with the acts for the *licence* and the master's degree³.

The *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, which formed so prominent a feature of the theological teaching, were, as I have already said, a collection of theological propositions compiled from the fathers. But

¹ "Porticus dux orthodoxiæ Sorbona et Navarra." Budé, *De studio litterarum recte et commode instituendo* (Basle, 1533), p. 16.

² Chevallier, *Origines de l'imprimerie de Paris*, p. 46.

³ This account of the theological course is taken from Thurot, pp. 133—136.

these were arranged and analysed and distinguished after a strict logical method, and conclusions derived from them by a strict logical process¹. The result was twofold. First, the concise form of the work made it a convenient theological handbook, while its dogmatism commended itself to an orthodox age. Secondly, an example was set of introducing subtle definition and rigid analysis into the field of religious belief. It was round the *Sentences* that much of the theology of the Schoolmen grew up. In the edition of the works of Scotus by Luke Wadding, his *Distinctions on the Sentences*, which was known as the *Scriptum Anglicanum* or *Scriptum Oxonicum*, occupies, with the notes and illustrations of his commentators, six out of twelve folio volumes. The labours of Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventura and William of Occam in the same field were hardly less voluminous.

The contemporary portraits of the doctors in theology at Paris and the other theological Universities have been drawn by unfriendly hands. Their presumption, their sophistical and straw-splitting theology, their ignorance and bad Latin, have been frequently painted. They are represented as taking

¹ See *Hist. Litt.* XII. for an analysis of the work, or, for a briefer account, Maurice, *Medieval Philosophy* (1857), pp. 150—156, and Mullinger, Pt. I. 59—63. For a complaint by Roger Bacon of its excessive use, to the exclusion of the text of the fathers, see his *Opus Minus* (Rolls Series), pp. 328—340.

a peculiar pride in their title of '*Magister*.' '*They think*,' says Erasmus, '*there is something implied in the title "Magister Noster" like what is implied in the Jewish tetragram. So they say it should be written in nothing but capital letters; and if any one transposes it and says "Noster Magister" there is an outcry that he has outraged the whole majesty of the theological title*¹.' One famous Paris doctor however, the immortal Maître Janotus de Bragmardo of Rabelais, cannot at any rate be charged with pride. His aspirations in life are purely material, and he has no hesitation in saying so. When at the conclusion of his oration on behalf of the University, a mixture of bad French, bad Latin and bad logic, his hearers burst into an unextinguishable fit of laughter, he laughs with the best of them².

We have seen that logic was the basis of the whole education of Paris in the middle ages. The *Organon* ranked almost with the Bible as an inspired work. Aristotle was known as '*the philosopher*,' as '*the master of those that know*.' But down to the beginning of the thirteenth century it was only as a writer on logic that he was known to western Europe; and not even as a logician was it by any means the real Aristotle that they worshipped. The two principal interpreters under whose guidance they studied him,

¹ "Porro theologos silentio transire fortasse præstiterit," &c. &c. *Moriæ Encomium*.

² Garg. I. xvii—xx.

Porphyry and Boëthius, were far from being pure Aristotelians; and both Porphyry in his *Introduction* and Boëthius in his translations and commentaries had fashioned him somewhat after their own manner¹. At the beginning of the thirteenth century the purity of the source was further polluted by the various Arabic translations and commentaries, not only of the *Organon*, but of several of the other works of Aristotle, translations of which again into Latin, made chiefly by order of Frederick II, were promulgated at Paris between 1210 and 1225². With a view to counteract this overgrowth of unorthodox interpretation upon the original text, St Thomas Aquinas in 1271, three years before his death, with the assistance of Pope Urban IV, procured new translations from the Greek of the physical, metaphysical, ethical, and political treatises³. This *Nova Translatio*, as it was called, was long regarded as the standard text, and, though, from its extreme literalness and especially from the practice of transcribing technical terms instead of translating them⁴, it often failed to give the true meaning of the original, it was at any rate far more faithful

¹ Hauréau i. 85—99.

² For these translations see Jourdain; Prantl, ii. 297—396; Hauréau i. 359—391.

³ Jourdain, pp. 40, 44, 393.

⁴ *ib.* p. 19. The translation of the *Politics* by William of Moerbeke (Bacon's William the Fleming) is printed by Susemihl in his edition of the *Politics*.

than the translations made from the Arabic versions which had in their turn been translated from the Syriac. Roger Bacon however had not a much higher opinion of the one than of the other. For his part he would have had them all burnt¹.

About the same time as the *Nova Translatio* appeared a work, which has already been mentioned as playing an important part in the Paris schools—the *Summulæ* of *Petrus Hispanus*. It is divided into seven treatises (*tractatus*). The first six are an abridgement of the *Organon*. The seventh, *De terminorum proprietatibus*, itself divided into six parts (which in some editions appear as separate treatises, thus making twelve instead of seven), was entitled the *parva logicalia*, and contained matter of which only hints are to be found in Aristotle². Whether this 'logic of the moderns' (*tractatus modernorum*), as it was called in contradistinction to the 'ancient logic' (*logica antiqua*) of Aristotle, was derived from Byzantine or western sources is a matter of considerable dispute, and seems to depend entirely upon whether the *Summulæ* was an original work or the translation of a Greek work by the

¹ *Opus Tertium*, p. 91; *Compendium Studii*, pp. 469, 471, 472 (Rolls Series).

² See Prantl, iv. 204, for the meaning of the term *parva logicalia*. More suggests that it was so called because it had little connexion with logic. (More to Dorpius in Erasmus' *Works* iii. 1897.)

Byzantine, Michael Psellus¹. For my purpose it is sufficient to point out the existence of this new element, having little in common with Aristotle, in a work which continued to be the chief text-book of logic in the schools of Paris far into the sixteenth century. Moreover it was round this new element in particular that from the beginning of the second half of the fourteenth century learning and controversy chiefly collected².

On the whole then there is little exaggeration in the remark of Giordano Bruno *that Aristotle owed more to the University than the University to Aristotle*³. For though the few may have been able to study him in fairly correct translations, it must be remembered that the great mass of students were wholly dependent on the oral lectures of their teachers, that the *Summulæ* was the text-book upon which the lectures were invariably based, and that in an age in which the extreme difficulty of consulting the sources and the absence of a critical spirit acted reciprocally, it was almost impossible to change the course of tra-

¹ The only advocate of the Byzantine origin of the *Summulæ* in modern times is Prantl. See *Gesch. der Logik* II. 264, III. 11 and 18, and *M. Psellus und P. Hispanus* (Leipsic 1867). The opposite theory is held by Mansel, *Artis Logicæ Rudimenta* (3rd ed. 1856), Introd. xxxiv. note; Sir W. Hamilton, *Discussions*, p. 126; Ueberweg, *Hist. of Phil.* I. 404 (note) and 459; Thurot, in *Revue Archéologique* x. (1864) 267—281, and *Revue Critique* for 1867, nos. 13 and 27; Val. Rose, in *Hermes* II. (1867) 146.

² See page 105.

³ Bartholmess, *Jord. Bruno*, I. 90.

dition. It was thus a traditional and not the true Aristotle who was worshipped in the schools of Paris¹. When we come to the subject of Roman law we shall see that exactly the same process took place then. The gloss had usurped the place of the text. It was the business of the new learning to restore the text.

Though from the earliest period of intellectual activity at Paris logic had been a distinguishing feature in her schools, and since the publication of the *Sentences* it had been called forth into increased prominence, it is apparently to the influence of Duns Scotus, the 'subtle doctor,' that the engrossing interest it attracted must be ascribed. The earlier schoolmen, Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, had, like Aristotle, regarded logic simply '*as a preparation for the study and knowledge of truth*'². It was only concerned with the form of thought: into the region of pure being it could not soar. But Duns Scotus recognised no limits to its range; according to him it could deal, not only with words, but with realities; instead of being merely preliminary to physics and metaphysics, it was their superior, nay, it superseded them³.

William of Occam, the 'invincible doctor,' the reviver of nominalism, the last of the great schoolmen,

¹ Cf. Vives, *De causis corruptarum artium* (*Works* vi. 61), "De-truncatus est Lutetiæ Aristoteles et traditus vix dimidiatus, ne sic quidem breviaria hæc lectores inveniunt: longum existimatur ea percurrere, sit satis indices aut rubricas inspexisse."

² Hauréau i. 33.

³ *ib.* ii. 308—317.

refused to logic the exalted station which his master Duns Scotus had claimed for it. But by excluding from the field of discussion the chief dogmas of theology, as beyond the province of reason, and thus, with the English prudence and common sense which marks him as a forerunner of Bacon and Locke, avoiding the ærial heights of metaphysics, he was enabled to study logic more thoroughly at the lower level to which he had brought it¹.

The effect of his teaching, combined with the increasing intellectual torpor of the age, was to turn aside speculation from the field of metaphysics, and to confine it to logic. During the remaining period of scholasticism the controversies which agitated the Paris schools, though affecting to be between nominalists and realists, were in fact between the 'terminists' or 'moderns' and the 'ancients' or advocates of formalism. The ban placed on the followers of William of Occam between 1473 and 1481 was, as Prantl shews, directed against them, not as nominalists, as it affected to be, but as 'terminists'.² The large number of treatises on logic printed between the invention of printing and

¹ He wrote two treatises on logic, *Expositio aurea super artem veterem* and *Summa totius logicæ*.

² For an account of this proceeding see Bul. v. 708, 709, 711, and for Prantl's explanation of it see *Gesch. der Log.* iv. 186, 187. The conservative opponents of the 'terminists' were all Thomists or Scotists, but several Scotists, such as Bricot and Tartaretus, were 'terminists.'

1520, a large proportion of which were the work of Paris professors¹, shews how firmly logic held its ground in her schools, and what a stubborn resistance it was capable of making to the attack of the humanists.

But logic was not regarded at Paris merely as a theoretical science². The student did not confine himself to acquiring the bare rules of the art. He put them into practice by constant exercises in disputation. *A boy, says Vives, is set down to dispute the first day he goes to school, and bidden to wrangle before he can speak. It is the same in grammar, in poetry, in history, in dialectics, in rhetoric, in short in every branch of study. Nor is it enough to dispute once or twice a day. They dispute till dinner, after dinner, till supper, after supper...They dispute at home, abroad, at the dinner table, in the bath, at church, in the town, in the country, in public, in private, in all places and at all hours*³.

Ramus, who was at the Paris University about

¹ See Panzer and Hain. Though between them they mention only about 24 treatises on logic printed at Paris before 1500, and half that number printed at Lyons, it must be remembered that neither of these bibliographers had access to French sources of information. After 1500 the number somewhat decreases, but from 1512 it begins to increase again.

² Dialectic and logic were generally used in the middle ages as synonymous terms, but strictly dialectic was considered to be the practice of the science, of which logic was the theory. Dialectic was applied logic. (Rémusat, *Abélard*, i. 300 and 302.)

³ Vives, *De causis corr. art.* (*Works*, vi. 50, 51). Vives studied at Paris from 1509 to 1512.

fifteen years after Vives, gives a somewhat similar account: *If I had to defend a thesis on a category, I thought it was my duty not to yield to an opponent, however right he might be, but by searching for some subtlety to embroil the whole discussion. If on the other hand I was the attacking party¹ my whole efforts were concentrated, not on enlightening my adversary, but on defeating him by some argument, whether good or bad it did not matter. That was how I had been trained. The categories were like a ball given to us to play with, which if we lost we had to recover by shouting, and if we held we had to resist its being taken from us however much we were shouted at. I was persuaded that the whole sum of logic consisted in disputing as bravely and as loudly as possible².*

Whatever advantage in the way of sharpening the intellect and giving facility of expression may have been derived from this practice of constant disputation, it was more than counterbalanced by the barren spirit of sophistry and quibbling, the striving for victory and not for truth, which it engendered. Rabelais makes the same complaint as Ramus: *Ils ne cherchent vérité mais contradiction et débat*, says Thaumaste, the Englishman who disputed by signs³. The account, which follows, of the dispute between

¹ The defender of the thesis was called the respondent, the attacker the opponent.

² *Scolæ in liberales artes* (Basle 1578) lib. iv. p. 424. Ramus became a student at Paris in 1527. See also Thurot, pp. 87—90.

³ *Pant.* II. ch. xviii.

him and Panurge is a fair caricature of the whole system. The process is hardly more absurd, the result not a whit more barren than many of the disputations which took place in the Paris schools¹.

These then were the general characteristics of the educational aspect of the Paris University at the close of the middle ages,—an almost exclusive devotion to theology, but to a theology which, based as it still was on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, had become stagnant and lifeless; an exaggerated reverence for the name of Aristotle, but for an Aristotle overlaid with interpretation and cut down by compendiums till he was barely recognisable; and lastly the penetration of logic and disputation of a most quibbling and sophistical type into every branch of study. These were the bulwarks of the old learning, the giants whom the humanists had to slay before they could enter upon their inheritance. They are generally known by the collective and convenient term of scholasticism.

Into the tortuous paths and thorny wilderness of the scholastic philosophy it is happily not necessary for me to enter; but before we turn our attention to the new intellectual movement which was to reign in its stead, it may be as well to clear ourselves of some of the prejudices which, as heirs of the Renaissance,

¹ Disputations or Acts formed part of the examination for the bachelor of arts degree at Cambridge down to 1839 (see Wordsworth, *Schol. Acad.* pp. 32—43), and still form the examination for the degree in the three faculties.

we have naturally conceived against it. From the increased attention which the so-called dark ages have received in the present century, and which tends to shew more and more that this darkness was merely comparative¹, the scholastic philosophy has, like the rest of the learning and literature of *those ages which knew nothing*, considerably profited.

From these investigations we may learn three things, first that 'scholastic' simply means 'taught in the schools,' and may be predicated as much of theology, or logic, or any other branch of learning as of philosophy²; secondly that the scholastic philosophy resembled all other philosophies, properly so called, whether ancient or modern, in directing its inquiries to things in their essence, in other words to metaphysical questions; thirdly that the distinguishing feature of the scholastic philosophy, the mark which differentiates it from modern philosophy, was its acceptance, not only of the general truths of the Christian religion, but of the whole doctrine of the Catholic Church, its endeavour to reconcile faith with reason, to prop up the edifice of faith with the buttress of syllogism. But when the Schoolmen began to withdraw from the field of enquiry, not the distinctively Christian mysteries, such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, for these had never been profaned by the handling of dialectic, but the chief

¹ See Maitland's *Dark Ages*, especially the introduction.

² Cousin, p. 224. Hauréau, i. 7.

metaphysical questions, such as the existence of God, their philosophy came to an end. Henceforth there was scholastic theology and scholastic logic in plenty, but no scholastic philosophy.

But because their philosophy failed as a system, we must not be blind to its merits. If it failed, it did not fail more than every philosophical system, as a complete system, as a solution of the great problem of existence, has failed up to the present day; and while it lasted, it did not contribute less than modern philosophies to the march of thought and the quickening of intellectual activity. But like other philosophies it had its day, and when it perished, there was no successor to take its place. What remained was an unsightly mass of dialectic, the bare poles and rafters of a once stately edifice. From these lifeless ruins the more enlightened minds like Pierre d'Ailly and Gerson and Nicolas de Clamanges turned aside either to humanistic studies or to public affairs, or to the consolations of a religion which satisfied their emotions if not their reason. The 'mystical theology,' with which from his treatise bearing that title Gerson's name is connected, and which found its supreme expression in the *Imitation*, was apparently nothing more than practical religion, based not on the unstable foundation of an ever-shifting philosophy, but on the far surer ground of human experience and emotions¹.

¹ See Cousin, pp. 253—257.

It is to the influence of the three men whom I have just named that such approach as the University made in the latter half of the fifteenth century to the new spirit of humanism must be ascribed. The appearance of the first Greek teacher at Paris in 1458, the establishment of the first printing-press in 1469 were both the work of the University. But the new studies were rather suffered with contempt, than hailed with enthusiasm. At the beginning of the reign of Francis I, when our period opens, the scholastic flag still waved bravely over the University of Paris; the rags of theology still fluttered on their poles of dialectic; the *Summulæ* and the *Sentences* still held their own in the schools; the controversies of Scotists and Thomists, of realists and nominalists, of terminists and formalists, still raged with fury¹. But it was all lifeless, withered, barren.

§ 2. *The Religious Orders.*

The other chief element of opposition, besides the University of Paris, with which the new learning had to contend in France, was, as I have said, the Religious Orders. The ignorance and immorality of the monks have been always a favourite topic

¹ "Parisiis clamatur verè sardonicè, et voce (quod dicitur) stentoreâ; fremunt aliquando ad spumam usque et dentium stridorem." Nicholas Darynton to Henry Gold, *Letters and Papers of reign of Henry VIII* (Rolls Series), iii. 880 (no. 2052).

with writers on the middle ages. The fidelity of the pictures drawn of them by contemporaries was taken for granted: it only remained to select from the mass of evidence the most piquant stories and the most telling denunciations. But it was forgotten that the evidence of bitter opponents is not the best evidence, and that these pictures of monastic corruption, which from the vividness of their colouring have made so deep an impression on our imaginations, have invariably been drawn by bitter opponents, not only by honest reformers, like Rabelais, Erasmus, or Luther, who rightly saw in monasticism a stronghold of the old and worn-out order of things, but by the worldling who found in the corruption of the monastery an excuse for his own vices, and by the spoiler who coveted its broad acres. Here again modern criticism has shewn that there are lights as well as shades in the picture.

In the words of a writer who was one of the first to dispel some of the mists of prejudice, which so long obscured the middle ages, *it appears to be the testimony of history, that the monks and clergy, whether bad or good in themselves, were in all times and places better than other people*¹.

With the morals of the monks I am not now concerned. But it would be impossible to present a faithful sketch of the state of learning and intelligence

¹ Maitland, *The Dark Ages*, p. xi. of preface; and cf. *Annales Monastici*, (Rolls Series), iv. pp. lvi, lvii. of preface (by Dr Luard).

at the close of the middle ages, without saying something of their intellectual life. In the first place we must be careful to distinguish between the monks and the friars. Called into being at two widely different epochs of civilisation, they did a widely different work. Western monasticism, the monasticism of St Benedict, arose in an age when religion and learning seemed in danger of being swept off the earth. The monasteries were places of refuge from the crime and barbarism of the outside world. They were the ark in which civilisation was preserved from the flood of anarchy which threatened to engulf it. The two products of civilisation, which are most necessary to man, agriculture for his physical, learning for his intellectual wants, had but for the monasteries come near to extinction. The monks were at once the agriculturists and the librarians of the dark ages.

The Mendicants on the other hand arose in an age in which civilisation was no longer in danger. Their work therefore was not to preserve civilisation but to spread it, a work no longer of defence, but of attack. They were to lead a life, not of peaceful contemplation, but of practical activity; they were to follow closely in the footsteps of their Divine Master, to be in the world, but not of the world, to heal the sick and to preach the Gospel. Thus the two systems were led into widely diverging paths of intellectual labour. The monks, living among their libraries in peaceful seclusion, copied manuscripts

and wrote uncritical chronicles. The friars, mixing in the busy throng of life, bent on influence and proselytism, threw themselves into all the studies of the age. They became masters of dialectic, they rekindled the waning interest in theology, they spun out the fine-drawn web of scholastic philosophy. The monks, in short, were the representatives of learning in the middle ages; the friars, of thought¹.

The colleges of the Paris University were preceded by and to a great extent formed on the model of the convents of the Religious Orders². The Mendicants led the way. In 1221, only five years after its confirmation by the Papal bull, The Order

¹ "Such is the history of Christian civilisation. It gave way before the barbarians of the North and the fanatics of the South; it fled into the wilderness with its own books and those of the old social system which it was succeeding. It obeyed the direction given it in the beginning,—when persecuted in one place, to flee away to another; and then at length the hour of retribution came, and it advanced into the territories from which it had retired. St Benedict is the historical emblem of its retreat and St Dominic of its return." Newman, *Hist. Sketches*, II. 434. Cardinal Newman in this and the preceding essay makes St Dominic the sole representative of the mendicant movement, but the services of the Franciscans to civilisation were surely not less than those of the Dominicans. For their physical studies, see *Mon. Franciscana* (Rolls Series, ed. Brewer) I. pref. p. xliii. If Thomas Aquinas was a Dominican, Roger Bacon was a Franciscan. As Cousin points out, the Dominicans were the conservative party, the Franciscans the innovators and bold speculators.

² For the Paris convents I have consulted Du Breul, *Théâtre des Antiquitez de Paris* (1639); *Paris sous Philippe de Bel* (Doc. inéd.); *Paris en 1380* (Hist. Générale de Paris); and Thurot.

of the Preachers¹ established a convent at Paris, in a hospital on the site of the present *mairie* of the 12th (the Pantheon) *arrondissement*. The hospital and its chapel were dedicated to St Jacques, and hence the Preachers were called in France Jacobins, and their convent at Paris Les Jacobins. The Minorites, in spite of their founder's prohibition of books and learning, followed their example in 1230. Their convent, known as Les Cordeliers from the popular name for their order, was in the Rue de l'École de Médecine. The Carmelite convent, Les Carmes, was at first on the right bank of the Seine², afterwards in the Rue de la Montagne de Sainte Gèneviève near the Place Maubert³. The Augustines, or, to call them by their official title, the Hermits of St Augustine, had their convent, first, like the Carmelites, on the right bank of the Seine, in a street off the Rue Montmartre, which now bears their name—Rue des vieux Augustins; then near the old

¹ The Friar Preachers, or, as they were called in England, Black Friars, were not called, after their founder, Dominicans till quite modern times. The same remark applies to the name Franciscan for the Friar Minors, or Grey Friars.

² On ground now occupied by the Caserne des Célestins, the name of which with that of the adjoining *Quai* perpetuates the memory of the religious order into whose hands the convent afterwards passed; while the neighbouring Rue des Barrés preserves the popular name of the Carmelites—*barrés* or *bigarrés*, from the striped dress of the order.

³ The name survives in the Rue des Carmes, and in the *Marché des Carmes* which occupies the site of the convent.

Porte St Victor, and finally near the Pont Neuf on the Quai des grands Augustins. Not only the Mendicants but the other Religious Orders followed the example of the Dominicans. The most flourishing college was the Cistercian one of Les Bernardins in a street near the Pont de l'Archevêché which still bears its name. Another Benedictine offshoot, the Cluniacs, had a college close to Les Jacobins.

Subordinate to these Paris colleges were the provincial ones. They were of two types, the *studia particularia*, of which there was one in each province of the order for the study of logic, physics, and the inevitable *Sentences*, and the *studia generalia* common to several provinces, which were devoted to the study of higher theology, and to the training of teachers for the *studia particularia*. The Paris colleges in their turn furnished professors for the *studia generalia*. The interesting features of this system are its centralisation and its training of teachers. As Thurot points out, the *studium generale* was a true *école normale*, while the Paris college was a sort of *école normale supérieure*¹. The creation of this system was originally due to the strong sense of organisation possessed by the Dominicans; but it was adopted by the other Religious Orders². Its success soon became visible. In 1253 out of twelve chairs of

¹ Thurot, p. 121, and see pp. 115—121 for the account of the system.

² For the Franciscans see Wadding, *Ann. Min.* II. 373—386.

theology at Paris nine were in the convents. Between 1373 and 1398 out of 192 bachelors of theology who were admitted to the licence 102 were Mendicant and 17 Cistercians¹. We have seen how jealously the University regarded this intrusion of the Mendicants into her special province, and how, after a long struggle, she had to admit them to her degrees. But they were not admitted on the same terms as her own students. They enjoyed some exemptions and were subject to some restrictions. Each order might only present to the faculty of theology one bachelor as a lecturer on the *Sentences*, except the Dominicans, who might present two. On the other hand they could take their baccalaureate at the end of five years instead of six, and it was not necessary that these five years should have been spent at Paris. These differences helped to foster the rivalry between them and the University; and down to the middle of the fifteenth century we find disputes from time to time arising between the two bodies, owing to the jealous spirit with which each clung to its privileges.

Whatever may have been the falling off in point of discipline and morality, the intellectual supremacy of the Mendicant Orders was fully maintained down to the middle of the fourteenth century. The Dominicans at Paris, as the Franciscans at Oxford, were the leaders of thought and education.

¹ Thurot, p. 112.

But the decline of the University which followed the outbreak of the Hundred Years War brought with it the decline of the Dominicans. From that time their influence steadily decreased. In the year 1400 the three leading men in the University, who were at the same time the three most distinguished men in the kingdom for learning and mental activity, were Pierre d'Ailly, Nicolas de Clamanges and Gerson, and not one of the three was either a mendicant or a monk.

The lighter literature of the whole fourteenth century abounds with satirical allusions to the mendicants, but towards the close of it the attacks on them begin to assume a more direct and serious shape. In 1384, the year of his death, Wiclif, their sworn enemy, wrote his *Fifty heresies and errors of Friars*, in which he denounces their 'hypocrisie, pride and covetise' in unmeasured terms¹; and in 1401 appeared Clamanges' treatise *On the corrupt state of the Church*, in which the monks and more especially the mendicants are denounced with no less bitterness². By this time it was evident that the fresh sap of vitality which the Mendicants had instilled into the religious orders was dried up, and

¹ Wiclif's *Select English Works* (ed. by T. Arnold), iii. 366 ff. The date is only conjectural, and Arnold thinks it possible that a follower of Wiclif was the author.

² *De corrupto ecclesiae statu* in *Appendix ad Fasciculum Rerum expet. ac fug.* ii. 555—569.

it seemed as if the whole system was decayed to the core. One more effort, however, was made to revive it, and though this revival did not take place in France, yet as it had considerable influence on humanism north of the Alps some mention of it must be made¹.

In the year 1384, Gerard Groot, commonly called Gerardus Magnus, who in his youth had studied at Paris, established a community of clerks, living in common but bound by no vows, who came to be known as the Brethren of the Common Life². They were the successors of the Mendicants as promoters of education, their system being the result of a feeling of repulsion for the scholastic theology and dialectic of the Mendicants. The study of the Bible and that of the Latin classics were prominent features in it. Thus their schools, which spread first through the Netherlands and then through Germany and were throughout the fifteenth century crowded with scholars, became the nurseries of humanism. At Zwolle was educated Johann Wessel³, surnamed 'the light of the world.' At the mother school at Deventer,

¹ See *Real Encyclopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* (Leipsic, 1878), II. 678—759; von Raumer, *Gesch. der Pädagogik* (2nd ed., Leipsic, 1846), I. 66—92.

² They were also called '*fratres bonae voluntatis*' and '*fratres devoti*.'

³ There seems to be no authority for the traditional statement that Rudolphus Agricola, who, like Wessel, was born in the neighbourhood of Groningen, was a pupil of Thomas a Kempis at Zwolle.

the celebrated Alexander Hegius was master for twenty-four years (1474-1498), and here it was that Erasmus studied from the age of nine to thirteen, and that Rudolphus Agricola spoke to him the prophetic words *Tu eris magnus*. Thus Deventer was connected with Paris both in its beginning and its end. Paris had educated Groot, the founder of Deventer, and now it was Deventer that educated Erasmus, the active ally of the new learning at Paris¹.

After the death of Hegius the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life began to decline. They could not keep pace with the age; their education lacked the freedom which was the keynote of the new era. They however lingered on till the last quarter of the sixteenth century, and then one society after another quickly dissolved².

It is to an ex-student of Deventer that the famous *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum* are supposed to be addressed, but Ortuinus Gratius, the schoolman in

¹ Jodocus Badius Ascensius, the printer and scholar, was educated at the Brethren's school at Ghent.

² It is asserted by several writers that one cause of the decline of the Brethren of the Common Life was the introduction of printing, which deprived them of their chief source of income, the copying of books. A fatal objection to this theory is that between 1476 and 1500 no less than 478 books were printed at Deventer by printers who, from the nature of the books printed by them (they are nearly all school-books) were evidently in the employment of the Brethren. (See Campbell, *Ann. de la typ. Néerlandaise*, The Hague, 1874.)

humanist's clothing, the *poetista asinus*, as Luther calls him, was a professor at Cologne, the head-centre of the Obscurantists, so that Deventer need not be held responsible for this exceptional product of her training¹. The *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum*, published as they were in the very year (1515)² from which I have chosen to date the commencement of the new era in France, may be looked on as the culminating expression of the attack of the humanists upon the ignorance of the monks. The picture is no doubt exaggerated, but the fact that for some time the monks complacently regarded this exquisitely absurd farrago of ignorance and imbecility and bad Latin as the genuine letters of their brethren speaks volumes³. If a man thinks his own portrait a faithful one, other people need hardly call it a caricature.

Monasticism, in short, as a potent instrument of education and civilisation, as an important factor in the government of the world, had come to an end. There was still much good in the monasteries and convents; still much learning, which in a later generation bore fruit in the noble enterprises of the

¹ Pope Adrian VI, a schoolman to the core, was also a pupil of Hegius at Deventer.

² The first part only in 1515, the second in 1516, the third in 1517.

³ This is told of the monks in England (Erasmus to Lipsius, *Works*, III. pt. 2, p. 1110; More to Erasmus, *ib.* p. 1575). For a good sketch of the contents of the letters see Strauss, *U. von Hutten* (Leipsic, 1858), pp. 231—254; also Michelet, *Hist. de France*, x. 38—42.

Benedictines of St Maur; still much vigour, which shewed itself in the activity of the Dominicans and Franciscans during the whole sixteenth century and in the foundation of new religious orders¹.

But the religious orders no longer ruled the world. They had often been revived and regenerated, and the sequel shewed that they were still capable of revival. The Reformation cut off their rotten members, and instilled fresh vigour into their system. They were restored to life—but not to empire. That was gone for ever. Like the scholastic philosophy, monasticism had done its work, and had to make room for a younger and more active successor. It had still an honourable and green old age before it, but it could no longer hold the reins of government. But as we look upon monasticism in this its hour of abdication, let us remember that it was put aside, not because it was worse than the rest of the world, but because it was no longer better, no longer able to lead it. Let us remember too that it left as a legacy to mankind the three men who most contributed to the downfall of the old order of things, and to the triumph of the new. Erasmus, Luther, Rabelais were all monks.

¹ The Minims were founded in 1473, the Capuchins in 1520, both of these being Franciscan offshoots, the Theatins in 1524, the Oratorians by Filippo Neri in 1558. The most important however of the religious orders founded in this century, that of the Jesuits, was virtually non-monastic.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE.

CHAPTER V.

POLITICAL INFLUENCES.

I HAVE mentioned three events in French history which, though belonging to the political rather than to the literary world, had a considerable influence upon the developement of the Renaissance in France, —the consolidation of the French monarchy, the invasions of Italy, and the material prosperity of France during the reign of Lewis XII. I propose to consider these somewhat more in detail.

§ 1. *The consolidation of the French monarchy.*

In the year 1450 the territory practically subject to the French king was barely half the size of modern France. It was an island in a sea of more or less hostile kingdoms, Aquitaine on the southwest, Brittany and Anjou on the west, Picardy on

the north, the Duchy of Burgundy on the east, and Provence on the south-east. It is true that, with the exception of Aquitaine and Provence, these provinces were fiefs of the French crown and their rulers owed allegiance to the French king as his vassals; but they were so powerful as to be practically independent of him. This was especially the case with the Duke of Burgundy, whose French possessions were only a small portion of his whole dominion. Moreover, besides these greater vassals there were numerous others, such as the Dukes of Bourbon, Orleans, and Alençon, who were not indeed strong enough to be wholly independent, but whose fidelity to the French king in times of quarrel with his neighbours was regulated mainly by their own immediate interests.

The first step towards the consolidation of the French monarchy was the final expulsion of the English from Aquitaine in 1453. In 1461 Lewis XI. succeeded to the throne with an avowed policy of breaking the power of 'the princes of the blood.' But his first contest with them, 'the war of the Public Good,' ended in a treaty of the most humiliating kind (1465). The confederate princes obtained all their demands; fresh provinces were granted to them, and above all Normandy was bestowed as an appanage upon Charles, the king's brother, in exchange for Berry. Lewis however was still more than a match for his opponents, who had

no policy, but were only stupid and greedy. It was the contest of Reynard the Fox with Isengrin the Wolf. Lewis recovered Normandy almost before the year was out, but a few years later found it expedient to become reconciled with his brother and invest him with the appanage of Guienne. Fortunately in 1472 he was relieved for ever from all difficulties in this direction by his brother's death without issue. His next piece of good fortune was the defeat and death of his most formidable rival, Charles of Burgundy, leaving only a daughter to succeed him (1477). Lewis promptly overran the Burgundies and Picardy, and, on the pretext that on the failure of heirs male it had reverted to the Crown, annexed the Duchy. Picardy also remained in his possession. His next acquisition was the Duchy of Anjou, which on the death of King René in 1480 without heirs male was also, in accordance with the same convenient doctrine, said to have reverted to the Crown. Provence however was allowed to pass under René's will to the Count of Maine, but he died in the following year, after making a will in favour of the French king. Lewis had now in a large measure attained the object of his policy. He had consolidated the French monarchy; of all the princes of the blood there were none left of any importance except the Dukes of Brittany and Orleans. With the absorption of Brittany into the Crown by the marriage of Charles VIII. with

the heiress of the last Duke (1491), and of Orleans by the accession of its Duke to the French throne (1498), the work was practically completed. France had not only almost reached her present dimensions, but she had become an united instead of a divided kingdom.

This new political idea of an undivided state governed by one central and more or less absolute authority, as distinguished from the old feudal kingdom with its loosely-knit aggregate of more or less independent fiefs, is in itself one of the signs of the passing away of the old order of things, and makes the reign of Lewis XI. of the highest interest and importance for the student of political history. But I am rather concerned to point out that the great increase of strength and unity which France gained by the consolidation of her kingdom was a most beneficial preparation for the new phase of civilisation upon which she was about to enter. It was in a large measure owing to the weakness and disunion of Italy, to the readiness with which she succumbed to almost the first touch of the invader, that the Renaissance which had blossomed there with such brilliancy and rapidity withered with equal rapidity away. It has often been observed that art and literature will flourish in a country which has lost all healthy vitality. But it is an error to suppose that the loss of vitality is the cause of their flourishing. It is only a free and

vigorous country which can produce a great literature or great works of art, but when these have once been produced it not unfrequently happens, in fact it may almost be said to be an universal law, that art and literature will continue to flourish when the country is no longer free or vigorous. They flourish partly because they can live for a long time by tradition and imitation, partly because when a country is politically moribund, the intellect and activity of her citizens turn in despair from the dead bones of politics to the still living organisms of art and literature, and so these, being fed, as it were, with the whole sap of the country, bloom for a time with an appearance of increased vitality. But sooner or later the general decay reaches them: the sap which nourished them, having been turned aside from its proper channels, was never in reality healthy and before long altogether dries up. Art no doubt will flourish under these conditions longer than literature, for it is in a less degree the reflexion of national life, but in the end it too must yield to the universal decay¹. Such was the fate of the Renaissance literature and art in Italy. From a like fate they were preserved in France by the vigorous political life, the national unity, the free and self-dependent organisation which they there encountered. The debt which France owes to that most unlove-

¹ Charles V. was crowned King of Italy in 1530, Tintoretto the last great Italian painter died in 1594.

able of men, and undignified of monarchs, Lewis XI, is indeed a large one.

But besides this general result of Lewis XI.'s policy of consolidation, there is a result to be noticed which has a more particular bearing on the Renaissance. Had not Lewis made France a great and powerful kingdom, and especially had not Burgundy been dismembered, there would probably have been no French invasion of Italy: the inspiration which the contact with Italy was derived from and which had so marked an effect upon the developement of the Renaissance in France would only have filtered through narrow and irregular channels, instead of being drawn copiously at the fountain-head.

§ 2. *The invasion of Italy.*

The year 1495 is an important landmark in the history of the Renaissance in France. It is the year in which Charles VIII. returned from his Italian expedition. The effect of this expedition—'the discovery of Italy,' as Michelet calls it—upon French civilisation has been enlarged upon by Michelet¹ and others with such effective eloquence that I need not

¹ "Elle (France) trouva sa propre originalité dans le contact, elle devint elle-même, pour le salut de l'Europe, et de l'esprit humain : elle-même, je veux dire le vivant organe de la Renaissance." Michelet, *Hist. de France*, ix. 140 (1879), and see the whole of the first four chapters on the Renaissance.

dilate upon it, but will confine myself to a few dry details. Charles VIII. set foot in Italy on September 3, 1494, and left it on October 23, 1495. To a possible objection that an invading army has little opportunity or inclination for art studies, it may be answered that Charles' *Voyage de Naples*, as Comines calls it, was a holiday-tour rather than a campaign. There was little fighting and much loitering. Three months were spent at Naples, and one at Rome, ten days at Florence, and six—without any reason, says Guicciardini—at Siena. Halts were made at Pisa and Piacenza on both the outward and the homeward march. It is impossible that these towns, most of them centres of the Renaissance movement, all rich in architecture or painting or sculpture, should have failed to make a vivid impression upon at least the more enlightened of Charles' followers. Charles himself, who, if we may believe Guicciardini, *was not only without any knowledge of the liberal arts, but scarce knew the characters of letters*¹, cannot be reckoned among the more enlightened, but he satisfied his vanity, if not his love of art and learning, by inviting artists and scholars to his court².

¹ Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia* (ed. 1822), i. 112.

² Notably the scholars Fausto Andrelini and Janus Lascaris, and the sculptor Guido Mazzoni. There is a detailed account of Mazzoni in the *Archivio Storico Italiano* for 1884 (Vol. xiv.), pp. 839 ff., by A. Venturi.

The expedition of Charles VIII, however beneficial to France in the furtherance of her spiritual developement, was politically anything but a success. Charles' advisers were too much affected by sentimental considerations, too much dazzled by the beauty of the land they had 'discovered', to be capable of any statesmanlike policy either for good or evil. They apparently never succeeded in making up their minds in what capacity they had come to Italy, whether as friends or foes : consequently their friendship was regarded with suspicion, and their enmity with something like contempt. But the passage across the Alps having once been opened was never closed. The claim to the throne of Naples, which had descended with the rest of King René's possessions to the French crown, was never lost sight of; it continued to be a convenient handle for frequent expeditions to that fair land which had fired the imaginations and kindled the passions of the eager Frenchmen. But these later expeditions were no longer complicated by sentimental considerations. The Cardinal Georges d'Amboise, Lewis' XII's chief minister, to whom the forward Italian policy which characterised this reign is in the main to be ascribed, made his preparations for the invasion of Italy in a thoroughly practical spirit. The first object of attack was the duchy of Milan, which Lewis claimed by right of his grandmother Valentina Visconti. The alliance of Savoy, the

Swiss, Venice, Pope Alexander VI. and his son Caesar Borgia had been secured: the king of Spain had been bribed with the promise of a share of the spoil: the emperor Maximilian was for the present occupied with his own troubles. Milan was thus left without a friend: in a month the whole duchy was overrun (1499). The submission of Genoa speedily followed. The expedition to Naples, which did not take place till 1501, was crowned with a like success, and from this time to nearly the close of Lewis' reign France was almost continuously engaged in Italian warfare. But the first successes were followed by numerous reverses and final humiliation. In December 1503 Naples was lost as quickly as it had been won. The next three years were spent chiefly in diplomacy and other preparations, the first result of which was that, on Genoa revolting, she was speedily crushed and treated with great severity (1507). Then came the notorious treaty of Cambrai (1508), by which Lewis, the German Emperor, and the Pope bound themselves together for the destruction of Venice. The French victory of Agnadello (1509) threw most of the Venetian cities into their hands; Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, Vicenza, Verona, Padua submitted one after the other. But the Venetians speedily recovered Padua, and from this time the tide turned. The death of the Cardinal d'Amboise (1510) made an appreciable difference in the conduct of the war, which

henceforth was carried on with greater languor and signal ill-success. By 1513 the French had been driven out not only of the Venetian territory, but of the duchy of Milan. The whole of their ill-gotten gains in Italy were lost.

Though politically the Italian policy of Cardinal d'Amboise was a grievous error, its effect upon the Renaissance movement in France was highly beneficial. The Cardinal was a true lover and a munificent patron of art and letters, and it was mainly no doubt through his influence that Italian artists and men of letters were invited by Lewis to the French court. Thus the conquest of Milan brought to France the architect and scholar Fra Giocondo, and the historians Paulus Emilius and Claude de Seyssel. A few years later, also at Lewis' invitation, came the accomplished scholar Girolamo Aleandro. The road over the Alps became a highway for scholars and artists as well as for armies. Not only did Italians come to France for employment, but Frenchmen went to Italy for instruction.

*Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes
Intulit agresti Latio.*

§ 3. *The material prosperity of France during the reign of Lewis XII.*

Besides the credit of having attracted Italian artists and scholars to France, Cardinal d'Amboise

and Lewis XII. are also entitled to that of a wise and just internal administration. Of this credit Lewis himself, whether deservedly or not, has received the main share. The name of 'father of his people' which his grateful subjects conferred upon him in his life-time, and the expression of universal regret which was called forth by his death, testify to his great popularity¹. The picture of the *bonhomme* riding on his mule to the Parliament-house, or journeying from Paris to Lyons amid the tumultuous expressions of his subjects' love, is a far pleasanter one than that of his concocting diabolical schemes with the hypocrite Ferdinand, or the scoundrel Caesar Borgia, for the partition of Italian territories. His reign was distinguished by three virtues which more than any other endear a monarch to his people, justice, order and economy. However foolish, however unsuccessful the Italian wars were, they at any rate cost the French people next to nothing. Only on one occasion, and then only to a small amount, were they taxed to pay for them.

It is precisely these virtues which most contribute to the developement of a country's material prosperity, of its agriculture and its commerce. *At no period of her history, says Henri Martin of the reign of Lewis XII, had France enjoyed such great prosperity. The absence of all civil war for*

¹ See Michelet, *Hist. de France*, ix. 281, 282.

twenty years, the good order maintained by a regular and watchful administration, the security of person and property, the protection afforded to the lowly against the great, to the labourers against the aristocracy and the soldiery, bore marvellous fruit; the population rapidly increased; the cities, straitened in their old ramparts, pushed forward their ever-growing suburbs; hamlets and villages arose as if by enchantment in the middle of woods or among once barren wastes. The last traces of the fatal wars which had depopulated France were entirely effaced, and a contemporary writer (Seyssel) states that a third of the kingdom had been brought again under culture in the last thirty years. There was an enormous increase in agricultural produce; the sums paid for farming the taxes were in many places more than two-thirds higher, and the revenues of the royal domain, increasing in the same proportion as those of private individuals, enabled the king to carry on his enterprises without oppressing the nation. Industry and commerce had made similar progress: commercial relations were indefinitely multiplied, and merchants made less difficulty of going to Rome or Naples or London, than formerly to Lyons or Geneva. The luxury and elegance of the buildings, of furniture, and of dress testified to the developement of art and the general prosperity¹.

¹ *Hist. de France*, VIII. 471, 472.

It is difficult to imagine two men more unlike one another than Henry VII. of England and Lewis XII. of France; than the king who *was governed by none*, who *towards his Queen was nothing uxorious*, and *scarce indulgent*, who *like Solomon was heavy upon his people in exactions*¹, and the king who was governed by his ministers, who was uxorious to excess, and who seldom taxed his people. But in spite of the dissimilarity of the two monarchs, their reigns were in their general effect strikingly alike. They were both periods of repose after long-protracted disorder, during which the two nations, by virtue of an administration conspicuous for order and economy, were healed from the ravages of civil war, and nursed into fresh strength, till at last teeming with renewed vitality and budding promise they burst into the full flower of the Renaissance.

Such were the general influences at work in the French kingdom during the half-century which immediately preceded the reign of Francis I. But there were also at work, as I have said, two particular influences, two influences more immediately concerned with my subject-matter—first the revival of classical studies, and more especially the revival of Greek, and secondly the introduction of printing. It is to a brief sketch of these two influences that the two following chapters will be devoted.

¹ Bacon's *Life of Henry VII.*

CHAPTER VI.

THE REVIVAL OF CLASSICAL STUDIES.

§ 1. *The revival of Latin.*

FOR the first four centuries after the labours of Charles the Great on behalf of education in France, the study of classical Latin, if it cannot be said to have flourished, was at any rate kept alive in France. This was especially the case in the monasteries. The letters of Servatus Lupus, Abbot of Ferrières in the middle of the ninth century, and of the celebrated Gerbert, who became Pope in 998 under the title of Sylvester II, are always quoted as evidence on this subject, and they certainly point to a fairly extensive knowledge of Latin classical literature in the writers and their correspondents¹. Fulbert, who was a pupil of Gerbert's at Reims, and who was first professor and afterwards Bishop at

¹ For Lupus see Maitland, *The Dark Ages*, p. 52; G. Voigt, *Die Wiederbelebung des classischen alterthums* (2nd ed. Berlin, 1881) ii. 335; *Hist. Litt.* v. 255—272. For Gerbert see Maitland, p. 56; *Hist. Litt.* vi. 593—599.

Chartres, was, like his master, a scholar as well as a man of science¹. In the twelfth century Abélard, Bernard of Chartres, and John of Salisbury, who was for several years a teacher at Paris and died bishop of Chartres, were all well read in the Latin classics².

It may be objected that these particular instances are no evidence as to the general condition of Latin studies. But we have other evidence. First, a large number of good French manuscripts of Latin authors date from this period. Secondly, the explanation of Latin authors formed part of the ordinary course in Grammar, or the first branch of the *Trivium*³.

In the twelfth century we find John of Salisbury in his *Metalogicus* inveighing bitterly against certain Paris teachers, who neglected the Latin poets for dialectic and philosophy⁴. The reign of the school-

¹ For Fulbert see *Hist. Litt.* vi. 44—46, and generally for the classical knowledge in these times see Newman, *Hist. Sketches*, II. 460—472 (*The Benedictine Schools*).

² For the 12th century see *Hist. Litt.* ix. 144—147, and John of Salisbury, *Policraticus sive de Nugis Curialium*, which abounds in quotations from the Latin poets. There are few Latin authors whom he does not either refer to or quote. He also refers to several Greek authors, but, with the exception of Aristotle, not as if he had read them. Aristotle he doubtless only knew from Latin translations.

³ *Bul.* I. 512—520; Crévier I. 80—84; John of Salisbury, *Metalogicus*, lib. i. c. 24, where he gives an account of the teaching of Bernard of Chartres. It appears that it was chiefly the poets that were lectured on.

⁴ *Metalogicus*, lib. i. c. i.—v.

men was fatal to classical literature. Rhetoric, the second branch of the Trivium, was completely neglected, and the Latin authors who were read in the course of Grammar were reduced to Priscian and Donatus. The use too of Latin for the expression of abstract ideas, for which the genius of the language is wholly unsuited, combined with the neglect of classical models to produce a marked deterioration in the Latin style of the writers of this period¹.

With the decay of the scholastic philosophy, the study of Latin literature began to shew signs of revival. In the reign of John the Good (1350—1364), who had a considerable love of literature, the Benedictine Pierre Bersuire or Bercheur, the friend of Petrarch, translated part of Livy into French². Charles V. (1364—1380), as I have already said, was himself a fair Latin scholar, and at his instigation several translations were made, the most noteworthy being those of Nicolas Oresme, made from Latin versions, of Aristotle's Ethics, Politics, Economics, and *De caelo et mundo*³. The catalogue however of Charles' library, which passed at that day for a marvel, shews us that the knowledge of classical literature in France was still very limited. The only profane Latin writings that the library pos-

¹ Cr  vier, i. 307. *Hist. Litt.* xvi. 138—146.

² *Hist. Litt.* xxiv. 173; Aubertin, ii. 563—565; Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits de la Bib. Imp.* (*Hist. G  n. de Paris*) i. 15—18.

³ Aubertin, ii. 565—568.

sessed were Lucan, Boethius, portions of Ovid and Seneca, and translations of Plato's *Timæus* and the principal works of Aristotle. If to these we add the French translations of Aristotle by Oresme, and translations of the above Latin works and of Valerius Maximus, Sallust and Vegetius¹, we shall have a tolerably complete list of the books relating to classical literature in the royal library².

Virgil is conspicuously absent. In earlier times he had been regarded with peculiar veneration, as he still was by the scholars of Italy. But in France at this time the strange legend, which, originating in Naples towards the close of the twelfth century and spreading rapidly beyond the Alps, represented him as a wonder-working magician, was current even among the learned³. The library however of John Duke of Berry, which though smaller had been formed with more care and taste than his brother's, possessed a copy of Virgil's *Eclogues*, as well

¹ There were ten copies of this translation of Vegetius, *De re militari*, which was made by Jean de Meun, the author of the second part of the *Roman de la Rose*.

² Delisle, i. 18—46, iii. 115—170, 335, 336.

³ See Comparetti, *Virgilio nel medio evo* (Leighorn, 1872). Vincent of Beauvais, a man of encyclopaedic knowledge, who lived in the thirteenth century, and our own countryman Alexander Neckham, 'one of the most remarkable of English men of science in the twelfth century,' gravely relate the current legend. See A. Neckham, *De naturis rerum* (Rolls Series), 309, 310, and preface (xvii. lxviii.). Compare also the feats ascribed to Virgil in *Les Sept Sages de Rome* (Soc. des anciens textes français ed. Gaston, Paris, pp. 40—44).

as copies of Pliny and Terence, authors likewise unrepresented in the royal library. This library could also boast of a Greek book, but the cataloguer was unequal to describing it¹.

The names of Pierre d'Ailly, Nicolas de Clamanges and Jean Gerson have been already joined together in these pages, as leading men in the University, and as turning aside from the dialectic-ridden theology of their age. It was therefore natural that they should endeavour to use their great influence in promoting a taste for classical studies. Nicolas de Clamanges, whom we have seen as a bitter enemy of the monks and the mendicants, was especially forward in this reform. *I often*, he says in one of his letters, *lectured on Tully's Rhetoric in the Paris University not only in public but in private, sometimes too on the Rhetoric of Aristotle. Those great poets Virgil and Terence are also often lectured on*². His own letters abound in quotations from the Latin classics. In later life he put aside profane studies as unbecoming to old age, in order to devote himself exclusively to theology³.

¹ Delisle, i. 56—68, iii. 170—193. With the libraries of Charles V. and the Duke of Berry, may be compared the books given by Humphry, Duke of Gloucester to the University of Oxford in 1439 and 1443, in which Latin prose literature, if not Latin poetry, is much better represented (*Munimenta Acad.* ii. 758—772).

² N. de Clamangiis, *Works* (Leyden, 1613), ep. 5.

³ See Epp. 10, 19 (both to Jean de Montreuil) and 124. In ep. 19 he quotes Terence's *hic dies aliam vitam affert, alios mores postulat*.

His friend Jean de Montreuil, the chancellor of Charles VII, who was killed in a tumult at Paris in 1418, is remarkable as being the first Frenchman of the Italian type of humanist¹. His zeal for humanism seems to have been kindled by the Latin writings of Petrarch and Salutati, which he had studied with the greatest care and admiration. Being sent as ambassador to Rome in 1412, he was enabled to become more closely acquainted with the country for which he already felt such strong sympathy. At Florence, on his way home, he saw the splendid library of Niccolo de' Niccoli; and shortly afterwards he followed his example by procuring from Italy copies of some Latin works that at that time were unknown in France, namely Varro's *De re rustica*, Plautus and part of Livy². His connexion with Italy was the first link in the chain, along which the new learning was destined a century later to pass. Though his letters are written in very indifferent Latin, they shew a real love and a considerable knowledge of Latin literature, especially of the poets. Virgil, Horace and Terence are the authors whom he most often quotes.

Christine de Pisan and Alain Chartier, who have already been mentioned in these pages as playing an

¹ I am indebted to Herr Voigt, *Die wiederbelebung des class. Alterthums* (ii. 347—352) for my introduction to Jean de Montreuil. A selection from his letters is contained in Martène et Durand, ii. 1311—1465.

² Ep. LXVI.

important part in the history of the developement of French literature, must also find a place here as forerunners of the Renaissance humanists: Christine de Pisan especially had a very considerable knowledge of Latin; though she loved France with the passionate intensity of a child of the soil, she was an Italian by birth, and thus forms another link between France and Italy.

The work which Nicolas de Clamanges had begun, found no one to continue it till half a century after his own connexion with the University had ceased. His successor was Guillaume Fichet, a member of the Sorbonne and rector of the University in 1467, to whom is due the revival of the study of Rhetoric, which for a long time past had almost entirely dropped out of the University studies. On this subject, which was practically confined to the art of Latin prose composition, Fichet lectured in the Sorbonne for eighteen years¹. Fellow-workers with him in the cause of humanism were his friend Johann Heynlin of Stein in Switzerland², who was rector of the University in 1469, and prior of the Sorbonne in 1467 and 1470³, and

¹ Crévier, iv. 330, 331.

² Hence the Latin form of his name, Lapidanus or de Lapide, and the French form, de La pierre.

³ Crévier, iv. 332—334. Heynlin went from Paris to Basle, where a University had been founded in 1460, and while there he took part in the foundation of the Tübingen University (1477). He ended his days in the Carthusian monastery at Basle (Chevillier, *L'origine de l'imprimerie de Paris*, p. 34).

Robert Gaguin, general of the order of the Trinitarians, who lectured on rhetoric at *Les Mathurins* and acted as a sort of public orator to the University. From his influence at the court of Charles VIII. he was of great service in promoting the growth of the new studies¹. The movement was also helped by the presence of the celebrated Bolognese scholar Philippo Beroaldo², who gave lectures at Paris for several months about the year 1477. Though at this time quite a young man, he had already lectured with success at Bologna, Parma and Milan.

Another native of Italy who lectured at this time at the Paris University was Fausto Andrelini³, who was appointed professor of the 'art of humanity' in 1489⁴. For a long time, down to his death in 1518, he enjoyed a considerable reputation, which, according to Erasmus, he by no means deserved⁵. His acquirements in fact lay in the direction of

¹ Crévier, iv. 348. Thurot, p. 84.

² b. 1453, d. 1505. See Mazzuchelli, *Gli scrittori d'Italia* (Brescia, 1753); a biographical dictionary remarkable for copiousness of detail, careful and continuous reference to authorities, and scrupulous accuracy. Unfortunately the work was planned on a scale too magnificent for human life, and the author died before he had got beyond the letter B.

³ See Mazzuchelli, s. v.

⁴ Bul. v. 793.

⁵ "Diu regnavit Lutetia", Erasmus, *Works* III. 403; "Parisiensis Academiæ candorem ac civilitatem iam olim sum admiratus, quæ tot annos Faustum tulerit, nec tulerit solum, verum etiam aluerit evexeritque". E. to Vives, *ib.* 535 (written in 1519, the year after Andrelini's death).

rhetoric and Latin composition rather than in that of solid scholarship.

A better scholar than Andrelini, though not a professed teacher of humanity, was the celebrated architect Fra Giocondo, who came to Paris in 1499, and stayed there till about 1508. His most conspicuous work was the construction of the *pont Notre-Dame*, but he also rendered good service to Latin scholarship by discovering several new letters of Pliny's, including part of his correspondence with Trajan¹.

Another sign of the increasing interest in Latin classical literature was the appearance of various translations of Latin authors into the vernacular. Thus in 1485 Robert Gaguin translated Caesar's *De bello Gallico*²; in 1493 appeared an anonymous translation of Cicero's *De officiis*; in 1500 a translation into verse of the *Epistles* of Ovid, by Octavien de St Gelais, and in 1509 one of the *Æneid* by the same poet, which began as follows;

Je chante icy les horribles faicts d'armes,
Je chante icy le premier des gendarmes³.

¹ Fra Giocondo was born at Verona about 1450, and was over 80 when he died. He published notes on Caesar's *Commentaries*, and editions of Vitruvius and other Latin authors, which were characterised by considerable rashness of conjecture. The new letters of Pliny which he discovered were first printed in the Aldine edition of 1508.

² Printed before 1488, by A. Vérard.

³ O de St Gelais, b. 1466, d. 1502. His original poetry is by no means so bad as the above specimen of his translations would seem to indicate. It is often quite free from the usual affectations of most of the poetry of the age.

Ovid's *Remedium amoris* and Cicero's *Paradoxa* were also translated about this time.

§ 2. *The revival of Greek*¹.

If the study of Latin during the Middle Ages in France was somewhat of a stunted and ill-featured growth, the study of Greek may be said never to have taken root at all. Here and there, the labours of the Benedictines of St Maur have discovered a Greek scholar, but after the twelfth century the race becomes almost extinct². *Graecum est non legitur* was the usual phrase with which a Greek quotation was passed over in the lecture-room of the university or the monastery.

The arrival therefore at Paris in 1458 of a professor of Greek is an important event in the history of French literature. His name was Gregorio Tifernas, so called from Tifernum, the Latin name of Citta di Castello³. He must have been an elderly man at this time, for he had studied Greek under Manuel Chrysoloras, the restorer of Greek

¹ The principal guides are Hody, *De Græcis illustribus linguae Græcæ literarumque humanarum instauratoribus* (London, 1742); Boerner, *De doctis hominibus Græcis litterarum G. in Italia instauratoribus* (Leipsic, 1750); Heeren, *Geschichte des Studium der classischen Litteratur* (1796).

² *Hist. Litt.* ix. 151, xvi. 138, xxiv. 338.

³ Bul. v. 692; Crévier, iv. 243—248; Naudé, *Addition à l'hist. du roi Louis XI.* in vol. iv. of Du Fresnoy's edition of Comines, p. 305; Heeren, ii. 137.

learning in Italy, who died in 1415. On his arrival he applied to the Rector of the University for an appointment as professor of Greek. The Rector, Naudé tells us, was at first somewhat taken aback at so unheard of a proposal; but he ended by commending it, and ultimately the University agreed to give Tifernas a yearly salary of a hundred crowns, on condition that he should lecture twice a day, once on Greek, and once on Rhetoric. It appears that he only stayed a short time at Paris; long enough however to have sown some seed, for Reuchlin in a letter to Lefèvre d'Etaples says that when he was at Paris in 1473 he learnt the elements of Greek from pupils of Tifernas¹.

The first native of Greece who taught Greek at Paris was George Hermonymus of Sparta², who in 1476 came to Paris from England, where he had been sent on a mission by Pope Sixtus IV. to ask for the release from prison of the Archbishop of York³. He does not appear to have been a competent teacher. Budé who took him into his house and paid him the large fee of 500 crowns (5500 francs) says that, except a good pronunciation, he learnt from him nothing which had not to be un-

¹ Reuchlin's *Briefwechsel*, ed. by Geiger (Tübingen, 1875) no. clxxi.

² Bul. v. 882, Naudé, *ib.*, Hody, 223, Boerner, 192—198.

³ George Neville, brother of the Earl of Warwick, who was imprisoned by Edward IV. at Guines near Calais, and died, shortly after his release on the 8th June 1476 (*Fasti Eccl. Angl.* iii. 111) and Polydore Vergil (Camden Society), p. 157.

learnt¹. Erasmus speaks of him with even greater contempt². Reuchlin indeed, who was also for a short time his pupil, makes no complaint, and he at any rate learnt from him the art of copying Greek manuscripts, by which he supported himself at the outset of his career. The fact no doubt was that Hermonymus had not the equipment of a scholar. He could read and write his native language with elegance and precision—itself no mean accomplishment in those days—but beyond that his knowledge did not go³.

Such as he was however, he was for nearly twenty years—down to the arrival of Janus Lascaris at the end of 1495—almost literally the sole teacher of Greek in Paris⁴. It followed that for the first half-century after its introduction the study of Greek made but little progress. It is true that the University had admitted the teachers of the new

¹ Budé does not mention the name of his teacher, but there can be no doubt that Hermonymus is meant. See Budé to Tunstall, Erasmus, *Works* iii. pt. 1. p. 245 and Leroy, *G. Budei vita* (Paris, 1540) p. 10.

² “*Lutetiæ tantum unus, G. Hermonymus Græce balbutiebat, sed talis ut neque potuisset docere si voluisset, neque voluisset, is potuisset.*”

³ There are two MSS of the Gospels in Hermonymus’ writing in the Cambridge University Library, one of which was copied by him for Budé.

⁴ Joannes Andronicus Callistus, a distinguished scholar, who had been a professor at Florence, came to Paris a little later than Hermonymus, but he died, at an advanced age, soon after his arrival (Hody, 227—332, Boerner, 164—169). Naudé (p. 305) and Bulaus (v. 692) have confused this Andronicus with another Greek teacher of that name, Tranquillus Andronicus Dalmata.

language within her sacred precincts, but it was by no means a cordial welcome that she gave them. His whole attitude, not only to Greek, but to the new learning generally, was rather one of contemptuous toleration than of active sympathy. The new teachers were allowed indeed to lecture, but the sleepy after-dinner hour was invariably assigned to them. The 'grammarians,' or 'poets,' as the votaries of the new learning were called, were looked on with suspicion and dislike by the main body of students. '*The better grammarian you are, the worse theologian and logician you will be,*' was a favourite maxim of Vives' tutor, who bore the significant name of Johannes Dullardus¹. It may be taken as a fair expression of the attitude of the Paris University towards the new learning.

It was not in fact till the arrival of Janus Lascaris² that the study of Greek can be said to have obtained a firm foothold. It is he, rather than Tifernas or Hermonymus, who must be regarded as the founder of Greek scholarship in France. He belonged to the imperial family of Lascaris, and was nearly related to Constantine Lascaris, the most distinguished of the exiled scholars who fled to Italy on the fall of Constantinople. We first hear of him at Florence, where he obtained employment from Lorenzo de' Medici, who twice sent him on a mission

¹ Vives, *De Causis cor. art.* lib. ii. (*Works* vi. 86).

² Hody, 247—275, Boerner, 199—218.

to the East to collect manuscripts. On his second return he found his patron dead, and the Medici being soon afterwards expelled from Florence, he gladly accepted an offer of Charles VIII. to accompany him to Paris. He was at this time about fifty years of age. His first residence at Paris lasted till 1503. Though his duties at court allowed him but little leisure for regular teaching, his willingness to give such help to students as lay in his power, and the sweetness of his character, which endeared him to all those with whom he came in contact¹, gave him considerable influence. Above all he was, what none of his predecessors had been, a genuine scholar. Among those who profited by his help was Budé, the father of French humanism, who read Greek with him, and was allowed the use of his manuscripts². He is also said to have assisted Claude de Seyssel in his translations through the Latin of Greek historians, one of which, that of Xenophon's *Anabasis*, was made from Lascaris' own Latin version³.

The successor of Lascaris was Girolamo Aleandro⁴, famous in the Annals of the Reforma-

¹ Germanus Brixius says that Lascaris was like a father to him (Erasmus, *Works* iii. 192). Erasmus' letters are full of his praises. Rabelais, who probably made his acquaintance at Paris between 1525 and 1530, calls him his 'bon ami' (*Garg.* lib. i. c. 24).

² Budé to Tunstall (Erasmus, *Works* iii. pp. 1. 345).

³ These translations remained in manuscript in Louis XII.'s library until after Seyssel's death in 1520.

⁴ Chevallier, 251—253: Mazzuchelli, s.v.

tion, who at the age of twenty-four had the honour of having the Aldine Homer (1504) dedicated to him, on the ground of his being one of the most learned men of his day. He came to Paris in 1508 at the invitation of Louis XII, who gave him a salary of 500 crowns (5500 francs). His lectures on Greek and Latin were a great success, distinguished foreigners coming to Paris to attend them. Among his French hearers were Guillaume Coq and the future Hebrew scholar François Vatable. Such was his popularity that he was made principal of the Italian College of the Lombards, and in 1512, in spite of his ineligibility as a Master of Arts of less than a year's standing, he was elected Rector of the University. But on the plague breaking out in the following year he left Paris for Orleans, and from there went to Blois. From 1514 to 1517 he was at Liège, whence he returned to Italy to take a leading part on the Catholic side in the great struggle with Luther.

But France was no longer dependent on foreigners for Greek teaching. The year after Aleandro's departure Budé published his treatise *De Asse* (1514), which at once won the admiration of all European scholars, and definitely established his reputation as one of the leading humanists of his time. Though the treatise was nominally on the Roman As, it dealt with the whole monetary system of the ancients. It was indeed Greek, rather than Latin, that was Budé's speciality. His reputation as a

Greek scholar rapidly increased, till he soon was regarded as standing with Erasmus at the head of Greek learning in Europe. But as the *De Asse* was not published till the eve of the reign of Francis I, I shall postpone the account of Budé's services in the cause of humanism till I come to the main part of my narrative.

Another Frenchman, somewhat older than Budé, who though far inferior to him as a scholar, shewed equal zeal for the cause of the new learning, and may justly be regarded as the *doyen*, not only of French reformers, but also of French scholars, was Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, or, as he was called, Faber Stapulensis. After studying Greek for six years in Italy, he came to Paris in 1492, and during the next thirteen years lectured and wrote commentaries on Aristotle with great diligence. He was also an indefatigable traveller in search of manuscripts, which he brought home for his friends Badius and Henri Estienne to print.

But after all the greatest impulse perhaps was given to French learning by one who was neither a Frenchman nor an Italian, by the friend and rival of Budé,—Erasmus. It was in the year 1496, only a few months after the arrival of Janus Lascaris, that he first took up his abode at Paris, as a student in the *Collège de Montaigu*. The delights of a residence in this college, which was then suffering under the reforms of its rector Jean Standouc, have been

vividly portrayed by him. The rotten eggs and sour wine which formed the daily food of the students, and the foul air of the dormitories, made Erasmus' stay a short one¹. But he frequently returned to Paris, paying several short visits in the course of the next four years, and residing there continuously from 1503 to 1507. His connexion with Paris thus became a close one; with the majority of the French scholars he was on terms of friendship or intimacy, and his considerable influence greatly contributed to the successful developement of humanism in France. It was in a no small measure owing to the vast learning, the noble tolerance, the hatred of scholastic pottiness and monkish narrowness, the stedfast piety, the tender love for humanity of this one man, that the new learning was saved from becoming in France, and northern Europe generally, what it had become in Italy, a tinkling cymbal. It was in Paris that the first edition of his *Adagia* was published in 1500. Though forming the germ only of the completed book—it only contained 800 proverbs, while the final edition contained 4000—it made a deep impression. It is true that it is merely a commonplace book compiled from the writings of the ancients, but *this manual of the wit and wisdom of the ancient world for the uses of the modern*, as Mark Pattison aptly calls it, coming at such a time could not fail to make its mark. It brought home to the

¹ Eras. *Colloquia*, *Τηρολογία*.

northern nations, more than anything perhaps had done before, the fact that the learning and wisdom of the ancients was still a living force, that the ancient and modern worlds were bound together by the tie of their common humanity.

Another native of the Low Countries who took up his residence at Paris about this time, was the printer Josse Bade of Asch near Brussels, commonly called Jodocus Badius Ascensius. He had studied, first at Ghent, in one of the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life, then at Brussels, and finally at Ferrara, where he acquired Greek under Guarini¹. We find him next at Lyons, filling the two offices of professor of humanity and press-corrector to the printer Trechsel. It was on the death of the latter, whose daughter he had married, that he came to Paris by the invitation of Robert Gaguin, and established himself, apparently in 1499, as a teacher of Greek and a printer². He was however more

¹ Giambattista Guarini, son of the celebrated humanist Guarini da Verona and grandfather of Giambattista Guarini the author of the *Pastor fido*.

² Chevallier, 136—138; La Caille, *Hist. de l'imprimerie*, 72—74; *Nouv. Biogr. Univ.* by A. F. Didot. Trechsel died in 1498, as appears from the imprint of a book published at Lyons on December 24 of that year, which contains the words, 'incipiente quidem et procurante egregio viro M. Johanni Trechsel Alemanno...cujus anima in pace requiescat'. In the preceding year Badius was certainly still with Trechsel, as his services are referred to in an edition of Robert Gaguin's *De origine et gestis francorum compendium* published in that year, and he was still at Lyons in the autumn of 1498, as we learn from the preface to his *Stultifera navis addita*.

distinguished as a Latin, than as a Greek scholar. He edited and commented on nearly all the Latin classical writers, and he is mentioned in the *Ciceronianus* of Erasmus, as one of the few Frenchmen whose claims to be called a Ciceronian were worth discussing¹.

Thus Badius was the first of that series of printer-scholars, the Estiennes, Dolet, Turnèbe, the Morels, who did so much for the cause of the new learning in France, who were to France what Aldus Manutius and his descendants were to Italy.

So intimately connected in fact was the new art with the new learning that in any account of the latter the former must also find a place. I must therefore complete my sketch of the progress of humanism in France prior to the reign of Francis I. by briefly tracing the history of early French printing.

mentum, which is dated from Lyons, Sept. 8, 1498. Panzer mentions an *Angeli Politiani orationes* printed in *ædibus Ascensianis* in 1495 (in the Bodleian), another impression *per Ascensium* in 1497, and two in 1498. If these are correct we must assume that Badius set up his press in Paris before actually coming there.

¹ Eras. *Works* i. 1311. He is mentioned before Budé, which gave great offence (Erasmus to Brixius, in Erasmus' *Works* iii. 1115—1119), and see *ib.* 1136 where E. says "Et tamen si verus est rumor, sic fremunt amici Budæi, quasi in cineres patris ac matris illius imminxerim; clamant, ô cælum! ô terra! Budæum cum Badio."

CHAPTER VII.

THE INTRODUCTION OF PRINTING¹.

THE date of this important event is 1470, in which year Ulrich Gering of Constance, Michel Friburger of Colmar, and Martin Crantz, by the invitation of Guillaume Fichet and Johann Heynlin, set up a printing-press in the Sorbonne. The first book printed by them was entitled *Gasparini Pergamensis Epistolarum opus*². It is without date, but a letter from Fichet to Heynlin, which serves as a preface, fixes it to 1470³. Editions of Florus and

¹ I have consulted Panzer, *Annales Typographiques*; Chevallier, *L'Origine de l'Imprimerie de Paris* (1694); A. Bernard, *Origine de l'Imprimerie en Europe* (1853) ii. 260—339; A. F. Didot, *Essai sur la Typographie* (1851), full of inaccuracies and quite unworthy of the author's reputation; *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, article Gering, (A. F. Didot); Greswell, *A view of the early Parisian Greek Press*, 2 vols (1833).

² Gasparino Barziza (circ. 1360—1431) was one of the earliest Italian humanists; he devoted himself to the improvement of Latin composition.

³ In this letter Fichet is entitled doctor and Heynlin prior of the Sorbonne. As I have said above, Heynlin was prior both in 1467 and in 1470, but Fichet did not become a doctor till 1470.

Sallust—both *editiones principes*—are generally supposed to belong to the same year, while the fourth place is assigned to a work of Fichet's on Rhetoric published in 1471¹. Seven other impressions, all of works more or less connected with Latin Rhetoric, are given by Chevillier for the years 1471 and 1472; and since his time copies of five more have been brought to light, namely, Terence, Virgil's *Eclogues and Georgics*, Juvenal and Persius, Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*², and Cicero's *De Officiis*, the last-mentioned having at its head a letter from Fichet to Heynlin, which speaks of editions of Cicero's *de Oratore* and of Valerius Maximus as having issued from the same press. Thus the influence of Fichet and Heynlin is plainly traceable in these early productions of the Sorbonne press, which under their guidance was entirely devoted to the service of Latin scholarship. But in 1471 Fichet was summoned to Rome by Sixtus IV. and in the following year, or the year after, Heynlin left Paris for Basle. Thereupon in 1473 the three printers migrated from the Sorbonne to a house in the Rue St Jacques with the sign of

¹ Five copies of this work were printed on vellum, of which one, dedicated to Cardinal Bessarion, is in the Library of St Mark's at Venice, a second, dedicated to the Pope, is in the British Museum, and a third is at Paris.

² The only known copies of the Terence and the Virgil are in Lord Spencer's library. There are two copies of the Juvenal and Persius, one in the British Museum, and the other at Magdalen College, Oxford. Bernard, ii. 309—311.

the Golden Sun, where their most important production was a Latin Bible, the first Bible printed in France. But they were no longer the only printers in Paris. A short time before their removal from the Sorbonne two of their workmen, Kaiser and Stoll, both members of the Paris University, had set up a press near the great Dominican convent in the same Rue St Jacques with the sign of the Green Ball. A keen rivalry ensued; no sooner was a book sent forth by the Golden Sun than it was followed by a rival edition from the Green Ball. Peter Schoeffer too came to Paris about this time, and sold there not only his own impressions but those of other German printers.

Hitherto nothing but Latin books had been printed, but in 1477 a new competitor, Pasquier Bonhomme, published the *Grandes Chroniques de France*¹, and in 1485 Antoine Vérard, the most celebrated of the first generation of French publishers and printers, began his long series of French publications with a translation of the *Decameron*.

The arrival of native printers in the field, coupled with the departure of Gering's two associates, which seems to have taken place in 1478, completely changed the character of the books printed. Hither-

¹ This is the first existing French book printed at Paris with a date, but Colard Mansion had already printed French books at Bruges, and in France itself Barthélemy Buyer had printed at Lyons in 1476 the *Légende dorée*. Bernard, ii. 337.

to, as we have seen, classical books had greatly predominated, but in the fifteen years from 1479 to 1493 inclusive I can find record, at the most, of only six impressions of Latin classics. While Gering, who was a rich bachelor and a votary of the new learning, could afford to consult his own tastes, his French competitors, who were working for their livelihood, had to be guided by the popular taste, the taste, not so much of the lower classes, who could not afford to buy books, as of the aristocracy and the universities. In the place therefore of Latin classics and works on Rhetoric, which few were able or cared to read, they printed romances and treatises on chivalry, devotional works and the time-honoured school-books of the old learning. There can be no stronger evidence how little progress the new learning had made in France up to almost the close of the fifteenth century than the record of the impressions of the early Parisian press. Exactly the same thing was going on in our own country, where Caxton, instead of ruining himself, as many of the Italian printers had done, by printing splendid editions of Homer or Virgil, had by the sale of *Chronicles* and *Romances*, *The Golden Legend* and the *Canterbury Tales*, become a man of considerable position¹. The day however was not far distant when the French printers were to yield to none in their devotion to the new learning.

¹ See Blades' *Caxton*, pp. 83, 84.

The first signs of a change in this direction begin to shew themselves in the memorable year 1495, in which Charles VIII. returned from Italy. From this time the number of classical books printed at Paris steadily increases. A large number of them were edited by Badius Ascensius, who in 1504 begins to make a decisive appearance as a printer and publisher¹. Many of his publications were published by him jointly with Jean Petit, who throughout his long career as a publisher, extending from 1497 to 1536, did great service to the cause of the new learning². Another worthy soldier in this little army of humanists was Henri Estienne the elder, the scion of a noble family of Provence, who, having been disinherited by his father, came to seek his fortune in Paris as a printer in 1502, and soon afterwards set up at the top of the Rue St Jean de Beauvais³ on the hill of Sainte Geneviève that press which was destined to become so famous⁴.

¹ Eleven impressions of the Ascensian press are mentioned by Panzer for the year 1504.

² Jean Petit is often called a printer, notably by Didot, but I can find no instance in Panzer of a book printed by him. He calls himself 'bibliopola', 'librarius' and 'mercator', never 'impressor'. I have counted 28 different presses employed by him.

³ His first impression was printed in partnership with Wolfgang Hopilius. Panzer wrongly assigns it to 1496. See Renouard, *Annales de l'imprimerie des Estienne*, 2^{me} partie, p. 1, n. 1.

⁴ Didot conjectures that it was in memory of the arms of his mother's family of Montolivet, that Henri Estienne adopted an olive-tree as the emblem of his press.

But as yet not a single Greek book had been printed. If a Greek sentence occurred in a Latin manuscript, either a blank was left to be filled up in writing, or the sentence was printed very inaccurately without breathing or accents. The introduction of Greek printing is chiefly due to Francois Tissard of Amboise, who had studied in Italy, and whose ambition it was to popularise Greek learning in France. It was at his instigation and with his assistance that Gilles Gourmont set up at Paris a press provided with Greek types, and issued in 1507 the first Greek book printed in France. It was entitled *βιβλος ἡ γνωμαγυρική*, and contained a Greek alphabet, some rules of pronunciation and grammar, and a few other tracts. Musæus, the *Batrachomyomachia*, Hesiod's *Works and Days*, and the Greek Grammar of Chrysoloras followed in the same year; and in the year after, through the enterprise of the same press, appeared the first Hebrew book printed in France, a Hebrew grammar, the work of Tissard himself. Tissard's connexion with Gourmont's press only lasted a couple of years. His place was supplied by Girolamo Aleandro, of whom mention has already been made. In the preface to one of the books printed under his auspices, his own Greek-Latin Dictionary (1512), he complains of the wretched condition of Greek printing at Paris, and especially of the scanty supply of Greek type, which made it necessary not only to leave out here and there a letter but sometimes to stop the work

altogether for several days¹. In fact for the first twenty years Greek printing at Paris made but very slow progress, the number of impressions from 1512 to 1527 inclusive barely averaging one a year². The turning point was the year 1528, in which Sophocles, Aristophanes, Lucian, and Demosthenes were all issued from Paris presses, the three latter being printed either by Gourmont or at his expense, and being apparently his final effort in the work at which he had so long and so diligently laboured.

¹ Greswell, i. p. 24.

² Greswell, i. pp. 104—107.

CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

IN the five preceding chapters I have attempted to sketch, first, the growth and decline of French mediæval literature and learning, and secondly, the beginnings of that new learning which was to be so potent an instrument in the production of a new literature. I now propose to examine somewhat more in detail the condition of literature, and of popular thought as exhibited in literature, during the twenty years that elapsed between the return of Charles VIII. from Italy and the beginning of the reign of Francis I.

We have seen that the year 1495, in which Charles VIII. returned from Italy, bringing with him in his train the distinguished Greek, Janus Lascaris, marks the beginning of the serious and effectual study of Greek in France. We have seen also that if the annals of the printing-press (so far

as can be inferred from data which must necessarily be incomplete) are to be accepted as evidence, the same year marks also the beginning of a wider interest in Latin classical literature. From this time there is an almost continuous increase in the number of Latin classics issued from the press, while some of the better-known authors are introduced to a larger circle of readers through the medium of translations.

Greek however still remained the exclusive possession of a few scholars. In spite of the efforts of Tissard and Gourmont to popularise Greek literature by means of the printing-press, there was no demand for Greek books. During the first twenty years after the first Greek book was printed at Paris, we find little more than twenty Greek books recorded as printed there. It is true that the Italian scholar, Girolamo Aleandro, lectured there on Greek for some years with great success, and became so popular that, in spite of his not being duly qualified, he was elected Rector of the University: but though he attained to this mark of popularity, a popularity that was probably assisted by the fact that he enjoyed the king's favour, he must have had many opponents among the staunch supporters of the old learning. In the very year in which he was elected Rector I seem to trace in the increased number of books on logic, the work of noted Paris professors, issued from the press a rallying of the forces of the old

learning, a determination to resist to the death the introduction of that dangerous and newfangled heresy, the Greek language. From this time the attitude of the University towards Greek was no longer one of idle curiosity or careless contempt; it was one of undisguised hostility.

The knowledge of Greek being thus confined to a few students, the world of Greek thought and literature was in the days of Lewis XII. absolutely without influence upon French literature. The influence of Latin literature on the other hand was considerable. Throughout the fifteenth century, ever since the days of Christine de Pisan, there had been a continuous effort to refashion French prose, both in point of language and of construction, after Latin models. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Latinising school represented by the *grands rhétoriciens* enjoyed, as I have said, enormous popularity. But the result of their attempts to improve the French language was in the highest degree unfortunate. I have already given a specimen of the prose style of Jean Molinet, who was at this time the recognised leader of the school¹. He was of equal repute as a poet, and his poetry was worse than his prose. It was stuffed not only with Latin jargon, but with puns and rhetorical *tours de force*

¹ See p. 70. For another specimen of the fashionable prose of this period see a letter of Jean Robertet about Georges Chastellain, given by Mr Saintsbury in his *Specimens of French literature*, p. 22.

and other puerilities¹. Another master poet of the period was Jean Meschinot, the author of *Les lunettes des princes*, which was first published at Nantes in 1493, and went through at least fifteen editions in the course of the next twelve years², and of a poem, consisting of two stanzas of eight lines each, which had the remarkable merit of being able to be read in thirty-two different ways without any injury to the sense or to the rhyme. Lastly there was Guillaume Cretin, a faithful follower of Molinet, whom Clément Marot honoured with the title of *Souverain poète françois*, and Geoffrey Tory the author of Champ-Fleury, compared for style with Homer and Virgil and Dante. Alas for the vanity of contemporary fame! He has attained immortality solely as the author of the ridiculous *rondeau* put by Rabelais into the mouth of the *vieux poète françois*, Raminagrobis, whom Panurge, when he went to consult him, found in the agony of death

¹ Here is a specimen of his poetry :

Puis que Loyaulté trespassa
De ce siècle, qui n'est pas sage,
Et que Vertu s'en depassa,
Oncques puis Amour n'y passa,
Ne repassa ung seul passage,
Avec les bons mon repas ay-je;
Mon pas en peu d'espace passe;
Fors l'amour de Dieu, tout se passe.

Crépet, i. 495.

² Brunet, *Manuel de Libraire*; G. Brunet, *La France littéraire au xv^e siècle*, pp. 133—135.

with *maintien joyeux face ouverte et regard lumineux*¹. These were the masters of the school; their disciples were numerous and prolific². It seemed almost as if the ship of French literature must founder amid such a deluge of jargon and absurdity. But there were still some writers who preserved more or less of the simplicity, directness, and clearness of French mediæval poetry. Such men were Guillaume Coquillart, the author of vigorous, if coarse, satirical poetry; Roger de Collérye who followed in the steps of François Villon; Octavien de St Gelais who, when he could free himself from the fatal influence of the *Roman de la Rose*, wrote somewhat in the graceful style of Charles d'Orléans; and Jean Marot, who besides epigrams and other light pieces, wrote an account in verse of the Italian ex-

¹ *Pant.* III. 21.

² The most esteemed poets of the early part of the sixteenth century are commemorated in the following verses by Clément Marot;

Molinet

Aux vers fleuris, le grave Chastelain,
Le bien disant en rythme et prose Alain,
Les deux Grebans au bien resonnant style,
Octavien à la veine gentile,
Le bon Cretin au vers équivoqué,
Ton Jean le Maire, entre eulx haut colloqué.

(Quoted by *Darmesteter et Hatzfeld*, p. 282.)

Alain is of course Alain Chartier. The brothers Greban were writers of mysteries who flourished in the middle of the fifteenth century. A similar enumeration of names by Marot is quoted by Pasquier, *Recherches*, lib. VII. c. 5.

peditions of Lewis XII, with the title of *Les Voyages de Genes et Venise*, but who is chiefly known at the present day as the father of Clément Marot.

But these poets, though they deserve all credit for having preserved, amid the prevailing bad taste, some of the simplicity and picturesqueness which had characterised the earlier French literature, had done nothing to instil into it what it so much needed to bring it to classical perfection, namely, fire and dignity and sustained eloquence.

The one writer of the reign of Lewis XII. who can be fairly said to have made some contribution to the improvement of the style of French literature is Jean le Maire de Belges¹. It is not to be expected that a nephew of Molinet and a professed disciple both of Molinet and Cretin² should be wholly free from the faults of the *rhétoriciens*; but though his style is occasionally disfigured by barbarous Latinisms, it is forcible, clear, and sometimes grace-

¹ Born in 1473 at Belges (now Bavai) in Hainault. In 1504 he entered the service of Marguerite of Austria, then governess of the Netherlands; after the death of his uncle Molinet he succeeded him as librarian to the princess and was soon afterwards appointed historiographer. In 1513 he became historiographer to Lewis XII, in whose service he went on various missions to Italy, and wrote pamphlets in support of the French king's policy. On Lewis' death he lost his place at the French court, was reduced to misery, and died in obscurity, according to some in 1524, according to others in 1548.

² On the title-pages of his poems he is always called 'disciple de Molinet.' The third book of the *Illustrations de Gaule* has a dedicatory preface to Cretin.

ful. A great poet he is not; his merit lies chiefly in his language, but there is also a vein of true poetical sentiment in him, which, had he fallen upon days more favourable to poetry, or been trained in a less pernicious school, might have produced poetry of a much higher order¹. But even as it is he rendered considerable service to French poetry; he forms the connecting link between the poetry of the Middle Ages and the poetry of the Renaissance; both Marot and Ronsard owed something to him; indeed Ronsard, who is said to have studied him with great attention, shews considerable traces of his influence. As a prose writer his services to French literature were even greater than as a poet, and his actual merits are far more incontestable. It is hardly too much to say that no such prose had yet appeared in France as that of the *Illustrations de Gaule*, the work by which Le Maire is best known². The style differs from that of the best mediæval prose, from that of Froissart, for instance, as the speech of a grown man differs from that of a child. The quaint lisplings of childhood are replaced by clear, nervous and well-balanced periods. Nor is there

¹ There is an appreciative notice of Le Maire de Belges as a poet by M. d'Héricault in Crépet, i. 505.

² The first book of the *Illustrations de Gaule et singularitez de Troye*, was published at Lyons in 1509, the second at Paris in 1512, and the third and concluding book at Paris in 1513. There is a well printed edition of the whole work, together with other writings both in prose and verse of Le Maire's, published at Lyons in 1549.

any loss in picturesqueness. It is indeed the happy use of picturesque epithets, of epithets, that is to say, which at once call up a picture before the mind, that especially distinguishes Le Maire's prose, and makes it, when he is at his best, almost a model of what descriptive prose ought to be. But there is this limitation to Le Maire's merits as a prose writer, that he is by no means always at his best, and passages of high excellence are too often followed by long wastes of dull bombast which remind one forcibly of Molinet. This also must be remembered, that it is only as a specimen of narrative and descriptive prose that Le Maire's work deserves praise¹. France was still a long way off the possession of a good prose style for the purpose of expressing more abstruse and complex ideas.

The merits of the *Illustrations de Gaule* are purely those of style. Its value as an antiquarian and historical work may be summed up by saying that Jean le Maire, who was a man of great learning, devotes the whole of the first two books to an account of the early origins of Gaul, and that among

¹ The following testimony by Estienne Pasquier to the services of Jean le Maire is worth quoting: "Le premier qui à bonnes enseignes donna vogue à notre poésie fut maître Jean le Maire de Belges, auquel nous sommes infiniment redevables, non-seulement pour son livre de l'*Illustration des Gaules*, mais aussi pour avoir grandement enrichy nostre langue d'une infinité de beaux traits tant en prose que poésie, dont les mieux escrivans de nostre temps se sont seu quelque-fois fort bien aider." *Recherches de la France*, lib. vii. c. 5.

the progenitors of the race figure Noah, surnamed Janus, 'monarch and patriarch of all the world,' Cam surnamed Zoroast, Pan, Saturn, 'lord of all Africa,' Japhet, 'lord of all Europe,' Hercules of Libya, 'king of Gaul, Italy, and Spain,' Jupiter Celtes and his daughter Galatea, and finally Francus son of Hector, from whom the Franks are said to derive their name. Such was the marvellous mixture of all the mythologies which was accepted as history by the contemporaries of Jean le Maire.

The tradition of the Trojan origin of the Franks had long been current in France, and the tale of Troy had throughout the Middle Ages enjoyed great popularity, which in the latter part of the twelfth century had received an additional impulse from the huge poem of *le Roman de Troie* written by Benoît de Sainte-More between 1175 and 1185¹. This, like all the other poetical romances, had often been re-fashioned, and it finally assumed a prose form at the hands of Raoul le Fèvre, chaplain to Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, who in 1463 re-translated into French a Latin version of the poem made by one Guido Colonna in 1287². *Le Recueil*

¹ The whole subject is fully treated by M. Joly in his *Benott de Sainte-More et l'épopée troyenne au moyen âge* (2 vols. 4to. 1871, 1872).

² The *Destruction of Troy* printed for the Early-English Text Society from the unique MS. in the Hunterian Museum is a free translation from Colonna's *Historia Trojana*, supposed by Mr Panton to have been made by Huchowne of the Awle Ryale, who he suggests should be identified with Sir Hugh of Eglinton.

des histoires de Troye, as Le Fèvre's version was entitled, has especial interest for Englishmen, in that Caxton's translation of it, made for Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, was the first book printed in English¹.

Le Recueil des histoires de Troye was only one out of the numerous prose versions of the old poetical romances, which, as I have said before, were at this time the favourite reading not only of France, but of the whole of Europe. Others of equal popularity were *Jason et Médée* (also the work of le Fèvre), *Les quatre fils Aymon*, *Baudouyn Comte de Flandres*, *Paris*, *Melusine*, *Robert le Diable*, *Valentin et Orson*, *Merlin*, *Lancelot du Lac*, *Galien rhétoré*, *Fierabras*, and *Huon de Bordeaux*². It was this popularity which determined the form of Rabelais's great work, and made him choose as a setting for deep philosophical ideas the rude extravagance of a popular giant-story.

Another species of literature, which like prose

¹ The *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* is without place or date. Mr Blades has clearly established that it was printed at Bruges with the types of Colard Mansion, and he conjectures that the date was 1474 (Caxton, c. 7). It was doubtless from this English version of the tale of Troy that Shakespeare took the story of Troilus and Cressida.

² The first four of these romances were translated into English by Caxton. English translations of *Merlin* and of *Huon de Bordeaux* (from which the story of Oberon is derived), the latter by Lord Berners the translator of Froissart, have been published by the Early English Text Society.

fiction has always been cultivated with success in France, and which like it found especial favour at the close of the Middle Ages, was satire. The *Roman de la Rose* had lost little or none of its old popularity, and had lately, to suit the fashion of the times, received a prose dress at the hands of Jean Molinet. But its satire was now more or less out of date; the age which it satirised had passed away. The popular taste demanded that the mirror should be held up anew to the vices and follies of the day. Of contemporary satire the most popular work, beyond question, was one not of French origin, but which became domiciled there by means of translations almost immediately after its first appearance—the famous *Narrenschiff* of Sebastian Brandt. It was first published at Basle in 1494. In 1497 appeared a translation of it in Latin verse made by Brandt's disciple Jacob Locher, which was accompanied by woodcuts of remarkable spirit. So popular had the work already become that Bergmann de Olpe of Basle, who had published the original poem, issued two editions of the Latin version in March, 1497, one in quarto and the other in octavo, a third in August of the same year, and a fourth in March of the following year¹. It was also printed at Strasburg

¹ There is a copy of the octavo edition of 1497 as well as of the second quarto, published in August, in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. Both quartos are in Lord Spencer's Library (see Dibdin, *Bib. Spenc.* iii. 203—216).

and Augsburg in 1497 and at Paris and Lyons in 1498. But before this a translation of it in French verse by Pierre Rivière, of Poitou, had been published at Paris in 1497 under the title of *La Nef des folz du monde*; and from this a French prose version was made by Jean Droyn and published at Lyons in 1498. Both these French versions, especially the prose one, became highly popular¹, and were reprinted more than once in the course of the next few years. Moreover in 1498 the printer Badius Ascensius wrote a *Stultiferæ navis additamentum de quinque virginibus*, partly in prose and partly in verse², and in 1505 he printed the old woodcuts of Locher's version with a new Latin text of his own. Both these were translated into French by Jean Droyn soon after their appearance.

The literary merit of the *Ship of Fools* is not great. It is devoid of humour, and the language, though sometimes forcible, is rough and homely. Its merit consists in its high moral tone and in the blunt directness with which it assails every description of vice. It consists of a number of titles or chapters (113 in the original work, 135 in Locher's translation) each accompanied by a woodcut and each

¹ A translation, made from the Latin version in English verse by Alexander Barclay was published by Pynson in 1509, and an abridgement in English prose by Henry Watson was published by Wynkyn de Worde in 1517.

² Published in 1500; and again in 1502 with the title of *Stultiferæ naviculæ, seu scaphæ fatuarum mulierum*.

dealing with some particular form of vice or folly, but there is no attempt to make a continuous story or to give any sort of unity to the work. In all the northern countries of Europe however, in an age when the examination of moral and social questions had more attraction for men than literary excellence, it attained enormous popularity, and was a powerful agent in preparing the way for the Reformation. It may safely be said that few books have had so great an immediate influence on mankind as the *Ship of Fools*.

Among the numerous admirers of the *Ship of Fools* was Erasmus, who in 1508 beguiled the tediousness of a journey from Italy to England by composing a work with a somewhat similar title, the famous *Praise of Folly* (*Moriæ Encomium*). On his arrival at Sir Thomas More's house he hastily wrote out his notes, but apparently without any intention of publishing the result. A copy however found its way to Paris and was there printed¹; and in a letter dated December 13, 1517, we find Erasmus complaining of a garbled French translation which had been made by Georges Haloin².

¹ The first edition of the *Moriæ Encomium* with a date is that of Strasburg, 1511. It is generally supposed that the first edition was one printed by Gourmont without a date, but assigned to 1509. It was printed by Badius Ascensius in 1512.

² "*Moriam, quam vir clarissimus Georgius Haloinus, me dehortante ac deterrente, fecit Gallicam, hoc est, ex mea suam fecit, additis, detractis et mutatis quæ voluit.*" Erasmus, *Works*, III. 275.

The irony of Erasmus' satire, in which ridicule took the form of praise, would naturally be appreciated by a far smaller class of readers than the direct onslaught of the *Ship of Fools*. Besides the *Moriæ Encomium* is far less general in its scope, being directed chiefly against the monks and the doctors of theology. But appearing, as it did, at Paris just at the time when the opposition between the old and the new learning was beginning to become intensified, it must have been hailed by the humanists with considerable acclamation.

The titles of both these celebrated satires were well calculated to excite the interest of Frenchmen. At no time in France had the Fool or Jester been a more popular character. *The office of court-fool*, says Paul Lacroix in his account of the reign of Lewis XII, *was worth more than a canonry*. Every *seigneur*, whether clerk or layman, had a fool with a bauble and a cap with ass's ears and bells¹. At no time either had the *soties* or fool-pieces played by the *Enfans sans souci* been in greater vogue. It was, in the words of Lenient, 'the golden age' of the *Bazoches* and the *Enfans sans souci*. At the very beginning of Lewis's reign the rights and privileges of these dramatic companies, which had been considerably curtailed by Charles VIII, were restored

¹ P. Lacroix, *Louis XII et Anne de Bretagne* (1882), pp. 381—392.

to them in full, and the *soties* and *farces* became a most important feature of Paris life. With all the hardihood and license of the Attic stage the comedians applied their criticism not only to the social but to the political questions of the day, and as their sympathies were as a rule strongly royalist and national, the government wisely left them free play¹.

The best-known writer of this political and social comedy was Pierre Gringore, a member of the *Enfants sans souci*, who has already been mentioned in these pages². Actor, manager, and dramatist, he was the Molière of the Middle Ages. His best-known piece, *Le Jeu du Prince des Sotz et Mère Sotte* was, as I have said, played at Paris on Shrove-Tuesday, 1511, before the king, and a crowded audience of all classes. It forms a complete tetralogy, composed of a *cry*, a *sotie*, a morality, and a farce. The *cry* was cried about Paris a week before the day of representation and was a summons to all classes to come and hear the play.

¹ See Lenient, *La satire en France au moyen âge*, p. 338, and c. xxiii; Sainte-Beuve, *Tableau*, 174, 175.

² P. Gringore was born between 1475 and 1480 and died about 1544. His original name was Gringon which he changed first to Gringore and then to Gringoire. An edition of his works, begun by MM. d'Héricault and de Montaiglon and continued by MM. de Montaiglon and de Rothschild, is in course of publication (Collection Jannet). It will be remembered that Victor Hugo by a bold anachronism has introduced Gringore into his novel of *Notre-Dame de Paris*.

*Sotz lunatiques, sotz estourdis, sotz sages,
Sotz de villes, de chasteaulx, de villages,*

.....

*Vostre prince, sans nulles intervalles,
Le mardy gras jouera ses jeux aux Halles.*

The *sotie* and the morality contain the main argument of the piece, which is the quarrel between Lewis XII. and Pope Julius II. In the *sotie* the two stock characters, the *Prince des Sotz* and the *Mère Sotte* (the latter played by Gringore himself), represented Lewis XII. and the Church respectively. Another character was the *Sotte Commune*, or the Commons. The chief characters of the Morality are *Peuple François*, *Peuple Ytalique*, *L'homme obstiné* (Julius II.), *Symonie*, *Ypocrisie* and *Pugnicion Divine*. The farce had nothing to do with the main argument, but was merely a vehicle for the coarseness and indecency, always so dear to a Parisian audience, which it was thought necessary to provide as a relaxation after the serious business of a political play¹.

Gringore was also the author of a remarkable mystery, entitled *Saint Loys*, and of various semi-dramatic pieces, of more or less political tendency. The most important of these, *Les folles Entreprises*, published in 1502, is far less royalist in tone than those of later date. It is said to have been in

¹ The *Prince des Sotz* will be found in the 1st volume of the *Works*. A good summary of it is given by Lenient, pp. 376—384.

consequence of its success that Lewis XII. or his ministers enlisted Gringore as a writer on the side of the Court. Henceforth Gringore's pieces were loud in support of Lewis' Italian policy. It must have helped not a little to strengthen his popularity with the people of Paris to have had so active and influential an advocate.

Another characteristic feature of the close of the Middle Ages are the popular sermons. Not only by the boldness and familiarity of their tone, but also by the power of dramatic representation which they display, they belong to the same race as the popular comedies. Of the preachers of these sermons the most notable were Olivier Maillard and Michel Menot, both Franciscans, and Jean Raulin a doctor of theology and director of the College of Navarre¹. The sermons of Maillard and Menot especially are most remarkable. Seldom, if ever, have vice and folly been denounced from the pulpit in plainer language. Nor does the preacher confine himself to mere generalities: he lays bare the particular sins and foibles of every class of society with a precision and fulness of detail which, if it gives them a grotesque appearance to modern readers, makes them at the same time highly instructive and entertaining

¹ Maillard b. circa 1430, d. 1502. Menot b. circa 1440, d. 1518. Raulin b. 1443, d. 1514. Maillard's sermons have been edited for the *Société des bibliophiles Bretons* by A. de la Borderie (1877). There is an excellent *brochure* on Menot by Ch. Labitte. See also Geruzez, *Hist. de la litt. franç.* i. 245—255; Aubertin ii. 374—385.

as pictures of the manners of the age. The following tirade by Menot against fine ladies who lie in bed on Sunday morning and take so long to dress that they come late to church, is so characteristic of the style of these sermons that I cannot forbear quoting it.

Et pourtant, Madame, de votre maison à l'église, il n'y a que le ruisseau à traverser. Voilà bientôt neuf heures ! et vous êtes encore au lit. On aurait plutôt fait la litière d'une écurie où auraient couché quarante et quatre chevaux, que d'attendre que toutes vos épingles soient mises. La reine de Saba était cependant femme aussi, mais femme de cœur et vous ne tenez pas de sa race. Pour vous prêcher à temps, il faudrait aller à votre chevet, dans votre chambre porte close, comme certains font pour la confession ; mais cela ne me convient guère et n'est surtout point dans mes habitudes. Puis, quand madame vient à l'office, ce n'est guère mieux ; elle arrive desbrallée, et si, pendant que le peuple chante les louanges du Dieu vivant, pendant que le prêtre élève sur l'autel l'holocauste sans tâche, quelque gentillâtre entre dans l'église, alors il faut que madame, selon les singulières coutumes de la noblesse, se lève, lui prenne la main et aille l'embrasser bec à bec. À tous les diables pareils privilèges, ad omnes diabolos¹.

A pendant to this illustration of social life of the day is Maillard's picture of the prodigal son, who is portrayed with the habits and even with the dress

¹ Cited by Labitte, from whom I have taken it.

of a *mignon* and *vert gallant* of the time of Lewis XII, with *les bottines d'escarlate bien tyrées, la belle chemise fronsée sus le colet, le pourpoint fringant de velours, la tocque de Florence à cheveux pignés*. Sometimes there is a passage of real eloquence, or a touch of true pathos, as in the following by Menot:

*Où est le roi Louis, monarque redouté, et Charles qui dans la fleur de sa jeunesse faisait trembler l'Italie?... Nous mourons tous et comme l'eau nous fondons dans la terre*¹.

It was at one time supposed that these sermons were preached in Latin with the occasional introduction of French words and phrases, and this was looked on as an additional feature of grotesqueness. But there is no doubt that the sermons were preached in French, and then translated into Latin from the notes of some one of the audience, the translation being probably revised by the preacher before publication². Not unfrequently it happened that the translator could find no equivalent Latin word for some popular expression, and was obliged to leave it in French, or at best with the addition of a Latin termination. Sometimes the sermon would be re-translated into French, and thus a few of them, as for instance the famous one of Maillard's preached at Bruges in 1500, have come down to us in the

¹ Cited by Labitte, from whom I have taken it.

² In the same way the sermons of Geiler the famous Strasburg preacher were preached in German, but published in Latin.

language in which they were preached, and probably without much alteration, the French version, like the Latin one, having been revised by the preacher.

Jean Raulin's style of preaching, if more dignified than that of the two Franciscans, was far less original and dramatic, and need not detain us. It may be noticed however that the story of *The animals who were ill of the plague*, to which we owe one of the finest of La Fontaine's fables¹, and that of the widow who consulted the church-bells as to whether she should marry her footman, adapted by Rabelais to the case of Panurge, are both to be found in Raulin's sermons².

It is a mistake to suppose that this practice of introducing amusing stories into the sermon was peculiar to these preachers. It had been the common practice throughout the Middle Ages. The two great repertoires of stories for the pulpit were the *Legenda Aurea* and the *Gesta Romanorum*, both of which works form so integral a part of the popular literature of the time we are considering, that they demand a passing notice.

The *Legenda Aurea* was compiled by an Italian Dominican, named Giacomo da Varaggio, who died archbishop of Genoa in 1298, and who is best known by the Latin form of his name, Jacobus de

¹ Book VII. fable 1.

² *Pant.* III. cc. 27, 28.

Voragine. The original title of his work was *Historia lombardica seu Legenda sanctorum*; that of *Legenda Aurea* was conferred upon it by the admiration of his contemporaries. As the original title implies, it was a collection of lives of saints, taken from various sources, some of which are of anything but an edifying character. It was translated into French, with additions, by Jean Belet, in the early part of the fourteenth century, and again by Jehan de Vignay before 1380. It is a revise of this latter version by Jean Batallier which, printed at Lyons in 1476, is regarded as the first French book printed in France¹.

The origin of the *Gesta Romanorum* is veiled in obscurity. But the most recent investigator of the subject, Herr Oesterley, has come to the conclusion that it was compiled at the end of the thirteenth, or the beginning of the fourteenth century, and that the probable place of its origin was England². The stories of which it is composed are taken, not only from Greek and Roman, but from Oriental sources; they have a

¹ See p. 157 n. 1.

² See the preface of his edition of the *Gesta Romanorum* (Berlin, 1872). An English translation, first printed by Wynkyn de Worde about 1510—1515, has been edited for the Early English Text Society by S. J. H. Heritage. The authorship of the compilation has been ascribed by some to Pierre Bercheur, the translator of Livy (see p. 138), by others to Helinand, but in neither case with sufficient ground.

common feature in the didactic and moral turn which is given to them.

The two species of literature that we have just been considering, the popular comedy, and the popular sermon, may be said to have formed, with the romances of chivalry, the staple intellectual food of the French nation at the close of the Middle Ages. If the food was coarse and homely, it was at any rate not insipid, and it was fairly wholesome. The two worst evils that can come upon a nation, the two surest signs of decay, are political apathy and moral indifference. Into neither of these evils was France in any danger of falling in the days of Lewis XII. The popular comedy both fostered and testified to the interest of the people in politics, the popular sermon kept alive their sense of right and wrong. Both comedy and sermon alike were signs of the first note of the Renaissance, of the spirit of inquiry and criticism.

Nor was the second note, the æsthetic revival, wholly absent. The cloister of St Martin of Tours, and the *château* of Gaillon had been built: Chenonceau and Blois were nearly completed. Michel Colombe had formed a school of sculptors at Tours, in which the Renaissance influence was plainly traceable. Jean Fouquet, painter to Lewis XI, had illustrated Livy with drawings remarkable for colour and draughtsmanship; and his successor, Jean Perréal, the painter of the espousals

of Charles VIII. and Anne of Brittany, had been employed and honoured by both Charles VIII. and Lewis XII.¹

Of the third note of the Renaissance, the revival of classical learning, sufficient mention has already been made. Thus, when on the 1st day of January 1515 Lewis XII. breathed his last and Francis of Angoulême reigned in his stead, France was fully prepared to enter upon the new phase of her civilisation. The new reign seemed happily to inaugurate a new era.

¹ These few details of early Renaissance art are taken from Mrs Mark Pattison's *The Renaissance of Art in France*. She conjectures that the illustrations to the *Bible Historiée* in the library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, are by Jean Perréal. The *Gideon's Fleece* of which she gives an engraving, is noticeable not only for its beauty, but for the fact that Gideon's coat of mail is a copy of a Roman *lorica*.

APPENDIX A.

TABLE OF MÆDIEVAL FRENCH LITERATURE.

I. 1096—1285.

<i>Chanson de Roland</i>	First Crusade
to	to the Accession of
Rutebœuf.	Philip the Fair.

(1) 1096—1180 (*Twelfth Century*).

From the First Crusade to the Accession of
Philip Augustus.

POETRY :

Chansons de Gestes.

Breton or Arthurian Romances.

Chrestien de Troyes.

Classical Romances.

Benoist de Sainte-More.

Robert Wace.

Gaymar.

Bestiaire of Philippe de Thaun.

Adam (a mystery).

PROSE :

Sermons of St Bernard.

(2) 1180—1285 (*Thirteenth Century*).

From the accession of Philip Augustus to that of Philip the Fair.

POETRY :

Romans d'Aventures.

Adenès le Roi.

Lais of Marie de France.

Lyric Poetry :

Audefroy le Bastard.

Thibaut de Champagne.

Quesnes de Béthune.

Roman de la Rose (1st part), by Guillaume
Lorris.

Fabliaux.

Rutebœuf.

Beast-poems of Marie de France.

Satires of Rutebœuf.

Roman de Renart.

DRAMA :

Miracle-plays.

Mysteries.

Li Jus de la Feuille (Comedy), by Adam de
la Halle.

Robin et Marion (Comic Opera), by the same.

PROSE :

Ville-hardouin.

Joinville.

Tales, as *Aucassin et Nicolette*.

II. 1285—1515.

<i>Roman de la Rose</i>	Accession of Philip
(2nd part)	the Fair
to	to
Philippe de Comines.	Accession of Francis I.

(1) 1285—1404 (*Fourteenth Century*).From the *Roman de la Rose* to Froissart.

POETRY :

Poetical Romances :

*Hugues Capet.**Huon de Bordeaux.**Baudouin de Sebourc.*

Lyric Poetry :

Jehannot de Lescurel.

Guillaume de Machault.

Eustache Deschamps.

Froissart.

Roman de la Rose (2nd part), by Jean le Meun.*Renart le Novel.**Renart le Contrefait.**Fauvel.*

DRAMA :

Miracle-plays and mysteries.

Farces played by the Clercs de la Bazoche.

Soties " " " Enfans sans Souci.

PROSE :

Froissart.

Tales.

(2) 1404—1461.

From Christine de Pisan to François Villon.

POETRY :

Alain Chartier.

Charles d'Orléans.

Villon.

DRAMA :

Mysteries and miracle-plays

(played by the Confrérie de la Passion).

Farces ; Soties ; Moralités.

PROSE :

Christine de Pisan.

Alain Chartier.

Gerson.

Monstrelet.

Juvénal des Ursins.

Antoine de la Sale.

Prose versions of the old Romances.

(3) 1461—1515.

POETRY :

Guillaume Coquillart.

Martial d'Auvergne.

Georges Chastellain.

Jean Molinet.
Guillaume Cretin.
Octavien de St Gelais.
Jean le Maire de Belges.
Roger de Collérye.
Jean Marot.

DRAMA :

Farces, as *Patelin*.
Soties and Moralités.
Pierre Gringore.

PROSE :

Georges Chastellain.
Jean Molinet.
Claude de Seyssel.
Philippe de Comines.
Jean le Maire de Belges.
Jehan de Paris.
Prose Romances.

Sermons :

Olivier Maillard.
Michel Menot.
Jean Raulin.

APPENDIX B.

ON THE NUMBER OF THE STUDENTS AT THE PARIS UNIVERSITY.

Anybody who has ever come across statements as to the number of the students at the chief Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages must have been struck by their great superiority in this respect over Oxford and Cambridge at the present day. Three thousand by the side of thirty thousand seems a great falling off. But when we come to analyse these figures, we find that they are only another instance of the saying that nothing is so fallacious as figures except facts. There can be no question but that there are more genuine University students at Oxford or Cambridge at the present day than there were at the University of Paris at its most flourishing epoch.

The most trustworthy available data for determining the number of *bona fide* students at the Paris University are those taken by Thurot, namely the annual number of bachelor's degrees in the

faculty of arts. Now in the second half of the fifteenth century the average number was under 300, while at both Oxford and Cambridge for the last few years it is over 500. From these and other data taken chiefly from the registers kept by the nations and the faculties, Thurot arrives at the conclusion that the whole number of students and professors together at the Paris University never exceeded 1700¹. This estimate however is probably under the mark. In the first place the period for which Thurot has taken his averages was by no means so flourishing in point of numbers as the next half-century. Secondly, he has not made sufficient allowance for students who never proceeded to a degree, of which there were doubtless a far larger number than in our Universities at the present day. But even suppose we increase his estimate to 3000, it falls short of the numbers of either Oxford or Cambridge, both of which have considerably over 3000 resident members, nearly all of whom are either students or teachers.

Thurot has excluded from his calculation all the younger students, the 'grammarians' who had not yet begun the regular academic course, and, for purposes of comparison with our Universities, they ought to be excluded. But they were naturally counted as members of the Universities and must have materially helped to swell the total. If we

¹ Thurot, *De l'organisation*, &c. p. 41.

consider that there were over sixty colleges in which nothing but the elementary studies comprised under the head of grammar were taught, and that in the large Colleges there were not only grammarian bursars, but grammarian pensioners, and also that the length of the grammar course was usually four years, it will probably be not more wide of the mark than calculations of this sort usually are, to reckon the number of grammarians as somewhat under 2000. We shall thus on a most liberal computation get 5000 for the number of persons, including men, youths, and children, engaged in the work of education at the University of Paris at its most flourishing epoch.

Now let us compare this result with various contemporary statements. In 1483 Robert Gaguin, the well-known professor of rhetoric and chronicler, says, in a letter to the Chancellor that there were formerly 12,000 students but now only as many hundreds¹, and Jovius Pontanus, the Italian humanist and statesman, gives 10,000 for the numbers in the reign of Lewis XI.² On the other hand, we read that the Rector of the University offered to bring 25,000 members of the University to the funeral procession of Charles VII³, but that only the graduates, numbering from 4000 to 5000, were

¹ Bul. v. 759.

² Pontanus, *De obedientia* (Venice, 1501), lib. v. c. vii.

³ Godefroy, *Cérémonial de France*, p. 43 (Paris, 1619).

accepted. Coming to the next century we have for 1535 the statement of the Venetian ambassador Giustiniani, who gives 25,000 as the popular estimate, but adds that the real number was less, and for 1546 that of another Venetian ambassador, Marino Cavalli, who puts it at from 16,000 to 20,000¹. In 1560 Scaliger, at that time a student at the University, gives the number as 30,000², and the same number is given for the year 1577 by a third Venetian, Lippomano, a manifestly exaggerated estimate for the middle of the Civil Wars, whatever it may have been for the period before they began.

With such varying statements it is impossible to arrive at any satisfactory result. But making all due allowance for popular exaggeration we can hardly adopt a lower figure than 10,000 for the number of so-called students of the University during the first half of the sixteenth century. The explanation is that only a fraction of these were, in any real sense of the term, students. The numbers were arrived at by counting everybody who had been matriculated at the University, and this included not only the army of paper-makers, copyists, printers, bookbinders, booksellers, and illuminators, who were in her employment, but even the college servants of every description, who had as much right to attend the professors' lectures and proceed to

¹ Tommaseo, *Récits des ambassadeurs Venitiens*, I. 44, 262.

² *Scaligerana altera* (Groningen, 1669), p. 179.

their degrees as the masters whose clothes they brushed, though probably only a few such as Postel, Amyot, and Ramus ever availed themselves of it¹.

There must always too have been resident at Paris a considerable number of persons who had taken their degree at the University but who were not engaged in University work. By far the greater part of the graduates who are said to have attended the funeral of Charles VII. must have belonged to this class. Making due allowance for exaggeration in the statement of the numbers on that occasion, we may fairly estimate them at about 2,000, which does not seem too high for a capital like Paris². With the addition then of these two classes, the old members of the University, and the matriculated members who were not in any sense of the word students, we may perhaps get the number up to 10,000, but beyond this it seems impossible to go.

¹ See, for a similar view with regard to the numbers of our Universities, Huber, *English Universities*, i. 401—404; *Munimenta Acad.* pref. p. XLVIII; Mullinger, *Univ. of Cambridge*, Part i. 362.

² The number of actual members of the University of Cambridge is about 12,000.

APPENDIX C.

ON SOME OF THE EDUCATIONAL TEXT-BOOKS OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND THEIR AUTHORS.

1. Cato's *Disticha de moribus*.

Nothing is known of the author of this work. He is generally called Dionysius Cato, but sometimes Valerius, and it is quite possible that Cato is really the name of the book and not that of the author. But of the wide popularity of the book there is ample testimony. It is frequently referred to by Chaucer. *He knew not Caton, for his wit was rude*, is said of the carpenter in the Miller's Tale. It was edited by Erasmus, and paraphrased into Greek by Joseph Scaliger. By the end of the fifteenth century it had been printed at least 50 times¹.

¹ Hain, *Rep. Biogr.* gives 49 editions, but he omits at any rate two of Caxton's.

2. Joannes de Garlandia.

He lived during the first half of the thirteenth century, and was, as Leclerc suggests, doubtless called 'de Garlandia', because he taught in the *clos de Garlande* where several of the schools of Paris were situated. Among his hearers was Roger Bacon. Besides the educational works already mentioned, a dictionary and several grammatical treatises, there are extant various Latin poems, notably one in eight books entitled *De triumphis ecclesiarum*, which were written by a Johannes de Garlandia who is probably, but by no means certainly, the same person. The Latin poet was an Englishman by birth, though educated and domiciled in France.

*Anglia cui mater fuerat, cui Gallia nutrix,
Matri nutricem præfero marte (v.l. mente) meam.*

De Triumph. Eccl.

(See *Hist. Litt.*, vols. viii., xxi., xxii.; Wright, *Io. de Garl. de Triumph Eccl.* 1856.)

3. Alexander Gallus.

The *Doctrinale* of Alexander Gallus or de Villa Dei was published in 1209. (*Hist. Litt.*, xviii.) Its importance as an educational text-book at the close of the middle ages is, as in the case of Cato's *Disticha*, testified to by the number of times it was printed. But in 1514, amid much murmuring of the orthodox, it was superseded by another grammar. The *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* are full of

allusions to this cherished educational work, at that time doubly cherished by reason of its recent condemnation¹.

Alexander Gallus also wrote a *Carmen de Algorismo*, which is printed in Mr Halliwell-Phillipps' *Rara Mathematica*. The seven operations of algorism are mentioned in the following lines

en argorisme devon prendre
vii especes.....
adision, subtracion,
doubloison, midiacion,
monteploie et division
et de radix estracion.

(*Hist. Litt.* xxii. p. 69.)

4. Johannes de Sacro Bosco.

Johannes de Sacro Bosco or John of Holywood (in Yorkshire) was born about the beginning of the thirteenth century. He studied at Oxford, and afterwards at Paris, where he became a professor of mathematics about the year 1230 and achieved a great reputation. The following lines fix the date of his death as 1244².

M. Christi bis C quarto deno quater anno

¹ Et isti humanistæ nunc vexant me cum suo novo latino, et annihilant illos veteres libros, Alexandrum, Remigium, Joannem de Garlandia, Cornutum.....Ep. 7.

² According to some authorities 1256, but surely 'quarto deno quater anno' means 'in the four and fortieth year' and not 'in four times the fourteenth year.'

*De Sacrobosco discrevit tempora ramus
Gratia cui nomen dederat divina Joannis.*

His best known work, *De sphæra mundi*, which I have mentioned as being a popular text-book in the Paris schools, was first printed at Ferrara in 1472. He also wrote a treatise *De arte numerandi*, which is printed by Mr Halliwell-Phillipps from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library in his *Rara Mathematica*. The Bodleian also possesses the manuscript of another work by him, *De Astrolabio* (*Hist. Litt.* xix. 1—4; Fabricius, iv. 128—130; *Nouv. Biog. Gén.* s. v.).

APPENDIX D.

TABLE OF EVENTS FROM 1495 TO 1515.

- 1495. Return of Charles VIII. from Italy.
- „ Arrival of Janus Lascaris at Paris.
- 1496. Erasmus becomes a student at the Paris University.
- 1497. Publication of the French translation of the *Ship of Fools*.
- „ Jean Petit begins his career as a publisher.
- 1499. Jodocus Badius Ascensius, scholar and printer, comes to live at Paris.
- „ Fra Giocondo, scholar and architect, comes to Paris and lives there for the next nine years.
- 1500. Publication at Paris of the first edition of Erasmus' *Adagia*.
- 1502. Deaths of Robert Gaguin, Olivier Maillard, and Octavien de St Gelais.
- „ Henri Estienne begins to print at Paris.
- 1503. Erasmus returns to Paris and resides there till 1507.

1507. The first Greek book printed in France is issued from the press of Gilles Gourmont.
„ Death of Jean Molinet.
1508. Girolamo Aleandro comes to Paris and lectures there on Greek and Latin till 1512.
„ Publication of Claude de Seyssel's *Les louenges du roy Louys xii^e*.
1509. Publication of the first book of Jean le Maire's *Illustrations de Gaule*, and of O. de St Gelais' translation of the *Æneid*.
„ Publication of Erasmus' *Moriæ encomium* at Paris (?).
1511. Gringore's *Le Jeu du Prince des Sotz et Mère Sotte* is played at Paris on Shrove-Tuesday.
„ Death of Philippe de Comines.
1514. Publication of Budé's *De Asse*.
1515. Lewis XII. dies on the 1st of January.

